JOHN L. STODDARD'S LECTURES

INDIA I INDIA II

THE PASSION PLAY

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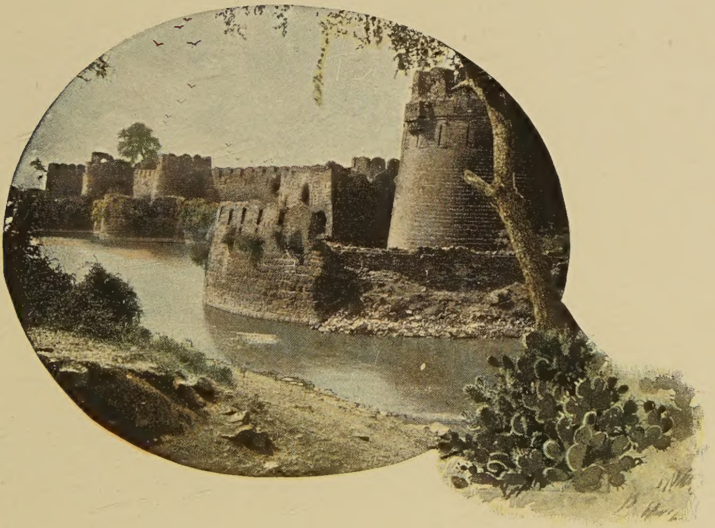
HIMALAYAN SCENERY.

JOHN L. STODDARD'S
LECTURES



COMPLETE IN TEN VOLUMES

VOLUME FOUR

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INDIA

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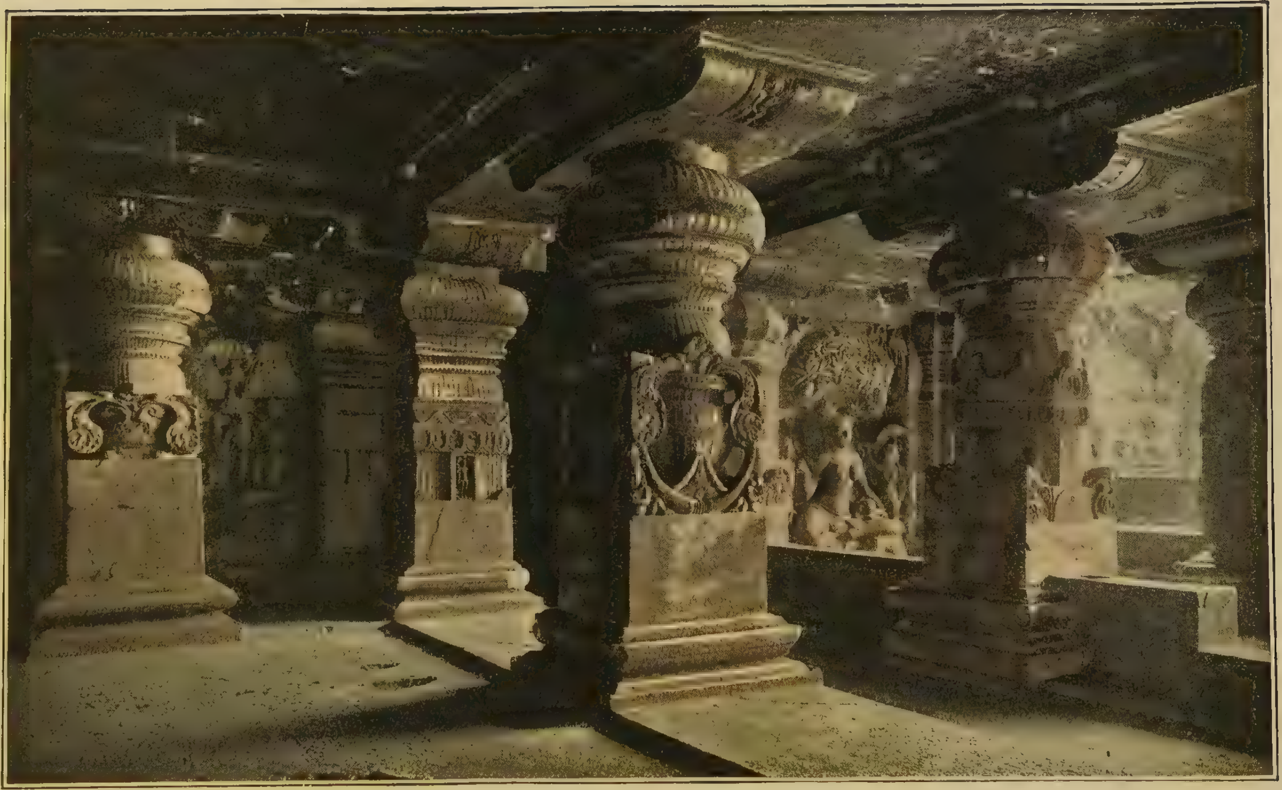


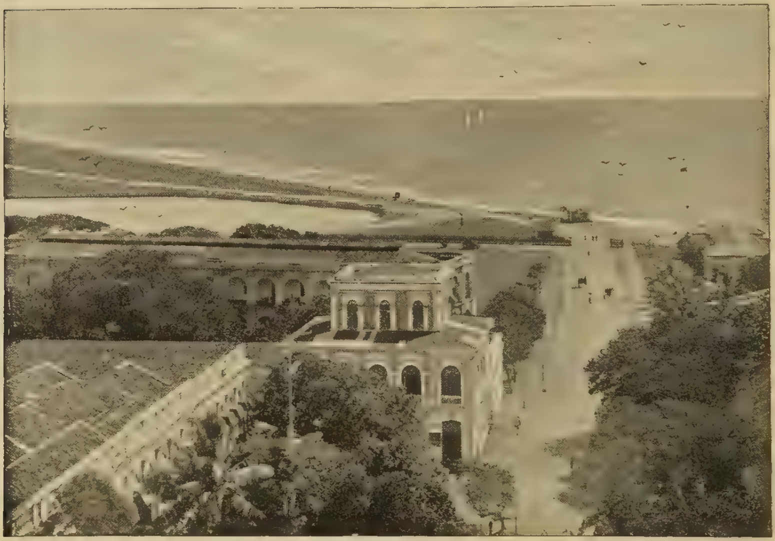
ONE OF INDIA'S ROCK-HEWN TEMPLES.

LECTURE I

INDIA is unique. It differs from all other lands in situation, climate, history, and religion. Its form is that of a gigantic triangle, one thousand nine hundred miles in length, and in its broadest part as wide as from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. Yet this enormous section of our earth is a peninsula. If we compare the continent of Asia to a ship, the sharp-pointed wedge of India is its prow, cleaving the Indian Ocean almost to the equator and rolling one great mass of water eastward to be silvered by the dawn, and a still larger volume westward to be gilded by the setting sun. The northern side of this vast triangle is rightly called "The Roof of the World." It is a vast mountain range so high that if the Pyrenees were piled upon the Alps, it would still tower above them both by four thousand feet. Yet just below these citadels of

AN INDIAN POSTMAN.

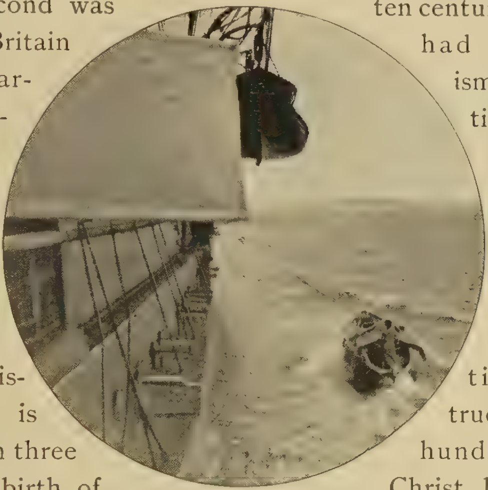
snow, upon the Indian plains, the heat at times exceeds that of almost any other place on earth. In parts of India, for example, during the prevalence of the hot winds, the mercury rises to 120° in the shade, and certain forms of vegetation wither and turn black, as from the effects of fire. At such times, in the homes of Europeans, all doors and windows facing windward are covered with thick mats, which are kept wet by buckets of water thrown on them day and night by native servants. The wind, which is like a blast from a furnace, becomes thus somewhat more endurable by passing through the moistened matting. But under any circumstances foreigners in India suffer greatly during the summer months, unless they can escape to the mountains. In summer the railway authorities actually keep coffins ready at the principal stations to receive the bodies of travelers who may have succumbed to the heat, victims of a climate suited to another race. India is, therefore, a land of startling con-



THE BEACH AT COLOMBO.

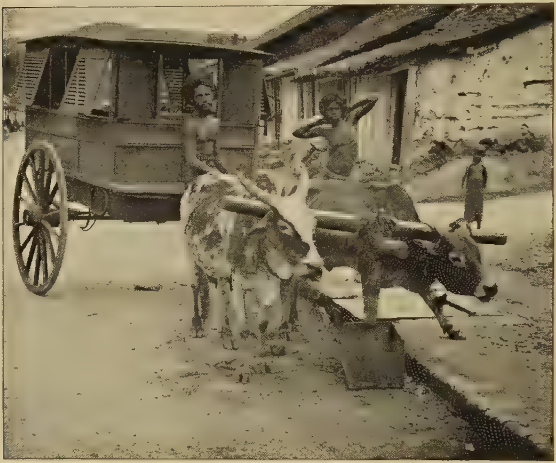
trasts. While prostrated by the heat upon the plains, one may be gazing on eternal snow. It is a kind of meeting, in one land, of the North Pole and the Equator.

But India's history is as wonderful as her geography. She is degraded now, but nothing can efface the memory of her splendid past. She is the cradle of the two most widespread religions of humanity, Hinduism and Buddhism—the first of which can boast of thirty centuries of existence, while even the second was ten centuries old before Great Britain had emerged from barbarism. Much of the civilization of China and Japan originated here. The language of the early Hindus was the Sanskrit, which scholars like Max Müller call the most artistic in the world. It is true, it ceased to be spoken three hundred years before the birth of Christ, but its best thoughts had meantime crystallized into a magnificent literature whose epic poems are the Bible of the Orient.


STEAMER AND PILOT-BOAT.

Like Italy, however, India had the "fatal gift of beauty." For ages men have looked on her with longing eyes. From Alexander the Great to the Great Moguls, and even to Great Britain, this land of wealth has been the object of the world's cupidity. At first it was too distant to be easily reached save by some Asiatic conqueror; but by a singular coincidence both India and America were discovered at practically the same time. For, only six years after Columbus landed on San Salvador, Vasco da Gama found the passage around the southern point of Africa, and while America lured adventurous mariners to her distant shores, in India European conquerors swung open to the commerce of the world the jeweled portals of the Orient. It is, then, this historic land, which wears the radiant Himalayas for a diadem and claims the Sanskrit-speaking heroes for her earlier inhabitants, that is the theme of this lecture.

It was late in the afternoon when, on our voyage from China across the Indian Ocean, we approached Ceylon. The pilot, who climbed from his little boat to the deck of our huge steamer, was the first human being we had met since leaving Singapore. All was excitement. An irresistible desire prevailed among the passengers to quote Bishop Heber's familiar lines—



"ONLY MAN IS VILE."

" What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle;
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile."

Two different groups were singing this at once; and every other person whom I met would say to me, "Well, I suppose that to-morrow we shall be where 'every prospect pleases.' " One solemn spinster gravely remarked that, for her part, she expected to find the Ceylon men no worse than those of other lands. At last the following notice was posted in the companion-way: "All allusions to spicy breezes and the depravity of man are strictly prohibited."

Some hours later our steamer reached Colombo, the capital of Ceylon, and anchored in the bay. We were asleep. A sudden flash from the lighthouse on the granite breakwater, coming through the stateroom window, fell directly on my face. I started up as if it were a conflagration.

"What is it?" I cried out to my companion.

"Do n't be alarmed," he answered; "it is the Light of Asia!"

As every traveler knows, when one arrives in port at night, sleep is no longer possible. Accordingly, at sunrise the next morning I was already on deck, eager to disembark.

Although anxious to explore Ceylon, I was sorry to leave, the steamer. The voyage from China hither had been the pleasantest I had ever known. During that time, as we subsequently learned, terrific storms had raged upon the North Atlantic, but the Indian Ocean had been as smooth as glass. Day after day, and evening after evening, we sat beneath awnings on the spacious deck reading and writing, or walking and conversing, or watching for new constellations in the southern sky. Though lightly clad we felt no chill.

THE HARBOR OF COLOMBO.

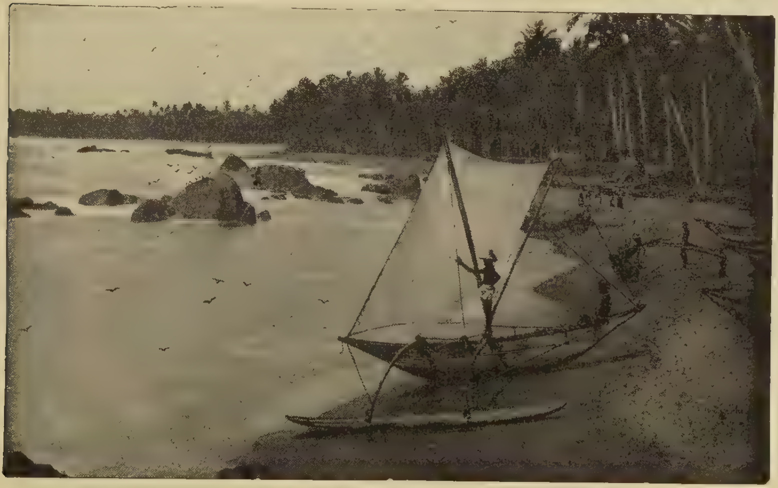
The mercury never fell below 79°. The soft caress of the breeze was perfectly delightful. It was one of those rare experiences in a life of travel which have almost made me love the sea.

DIVERS.

Even before daybreak our steamer was surrounded by a multitude of little boats, tenanted by naked boys who sought to show their skill in diving. From time to time we threw into the water small silver coins, and laughed to see the urchins dive in hot pursuit, twenty or thirty vanishing together in one tremendous splash. It seemed impossible that so small an object could be found in such a crowd, but not one silver piece was ever lost or even reached the bottom of the sea. The lucky boy would hold it up in triumph as he climbed into his canoe.

ON THE INDIAN OCEAN.

But presently other boats arrived to take us to the land. They were the strangest looking craft I ever saw; for though about twenty feet in length and narrow as a wherry, they rose at least two feet above the water. The bottom of each was merely the hollowed trunk of a tree, to which long planks were fastened to form the sides. They would capsize upon the slightest provocation, were it not for an outrigger of bamboo poles arching out to a log about eight feet away, which even in the roughest water will keep the slender boats from upsetting. In this respect they certainly are most ingenious, but the confusion and collisions occasioned by these outriggers in a crowd can easily be imagined.



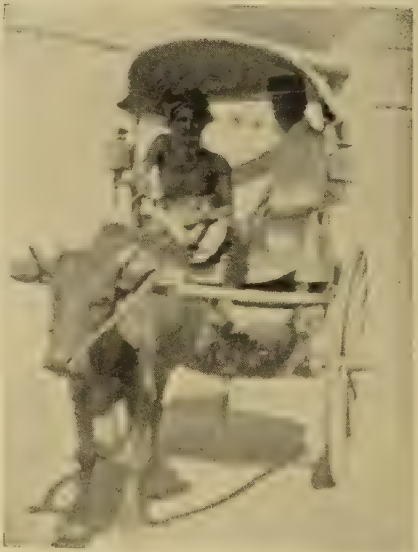
CEYLON BOATS.

In one such boat, however, we risked our lives, and ten minutes later stepped upon the soil of Colombo. A few feet from the landing-pier stands the Grand Oriental Hotel. I recollect this now as an enormous gridiron, upon which I was broiled for several days. I have, however, no fault to find with it. The trouble was—not with the gridiron, but with the sun. A brief exposure to the solar rays, even when protected by a white umbrella, produced a curious feeling in my head and spine. This was the warmest place we found in all our travels, though residents assured us that the really hot

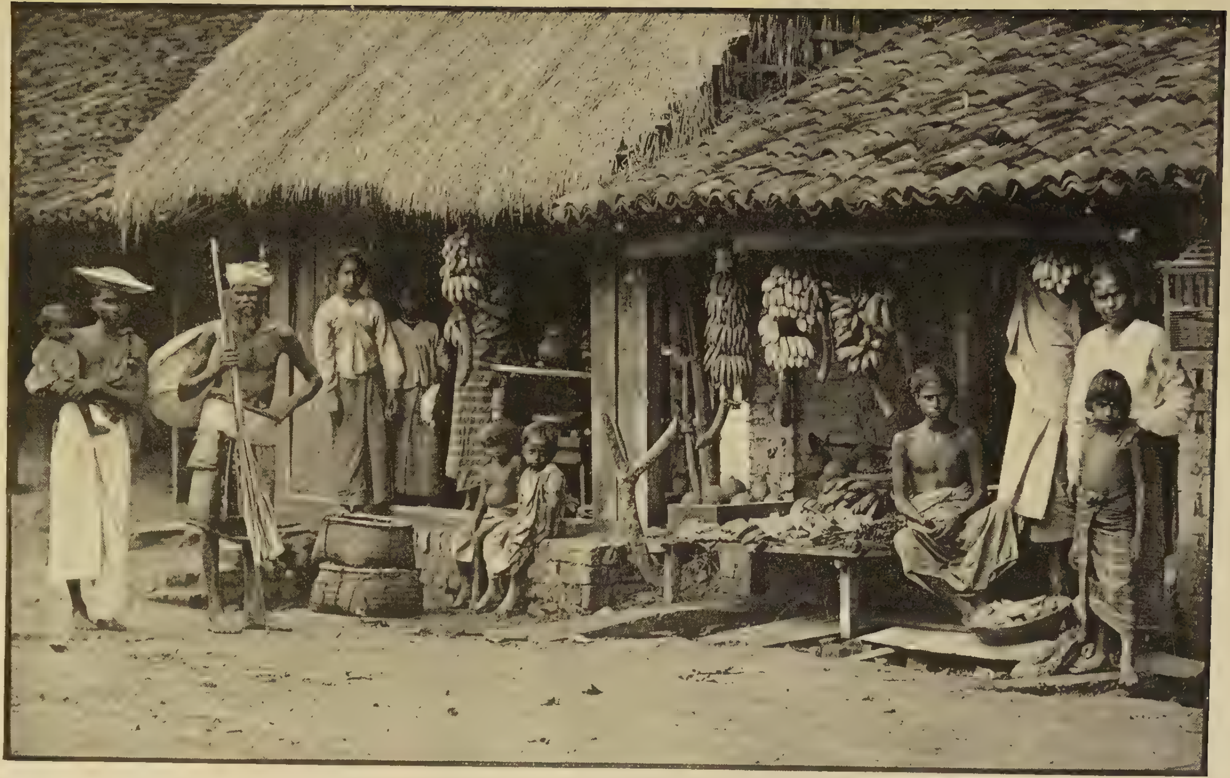
THE GRAND ORIENTAL HOTEL.

weather had not yet set in. But even in December, in the dining-room, gigantic wooden fans, covered with muslin and hanging from the ceiling, were in constant motion. These fans, which are essential to the comfort of Europeans in India, are called *punkahs*, and the relays of perspiring coolies who pull them back and forth, day and night, bear the euphonious name of *punkah wallahs*, the pay of each of them being sixpence a day. Every one in Colombo seemed to be dressed in white, except the natives. They wore extremely little except black — in suits that never could be changed.

Dressed in our lightest clothes we presently started out to see Colombo. A singular means of transportation stood at the hotel steps. It was a springless, two-wheeled cart, drawn by a bullock. Yet this was a regularly licensed vehicle of the town, with lamps which must be lighted when the sun goes down, like those



MY "SPICY" DRIVE.



NATIVE LIFE, COLOMBO.

of our city cabs. The driver was a Hindu, whose only dress consisted of a handkerchief about his waist and a table-cloth around his head. I shall never forget that ride, for the bullock-cart was so extremely short that, when once in it, I found myself only two feet away from the bullock and six-and-a-half inches from the man. Accordingly, I had an admirable opportunity to study the persuasive powers of the driver, whose only modes of making the poor beast advance were those of uttering incessant cries resembling the creaking of a rusty hinge, and of continually twisting its tail, long since grown hairless under his manipulations. I soon discovered also that, after the fashion of the country, the Hindu had besmeared himself from head to foot with cocoanut-oil to make his skin insensible to draughts. Hence, as one of the breezes of Ceylon was blowing at the time, that was the "spiciest" drive I ever took.

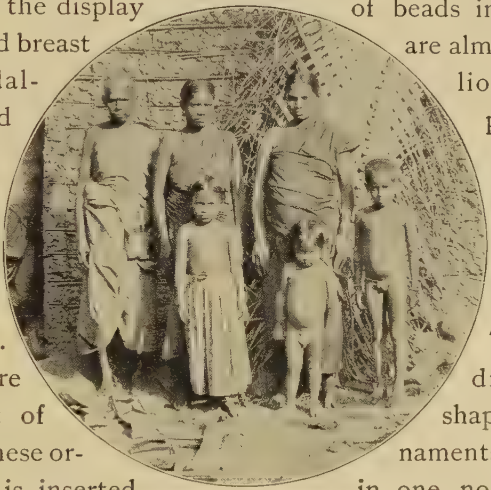
AMONG THE PALMS.

Aside, however, from the drawbacks I have mentioned, it was a charming expedition. Only a few minutes after leaving the hotel, we entered a forest of stately palm-trees. This was indeed the Ceylon I had read of. For seven miles we rode through a vast park of tropical vegetation. Thousands of cocoanut-palms waved above us their drooping foliage and clusters of their bulbous fruit gleamed through the leaves like balls of gold. Ten such trees sometimes form a native's wedding-present to his daughter, though few are able to furnish such a handsome dowry.

Before visiting India I had never realized how valuable palm-trees are to the people, and in how many ways they can be utilized. Thus from their bark the natives manufacture ropes and matting; from the leaves are made baskets, hats, and palm-leaf fans; while the fibre of the nut furnishes rough clothing, sails, and fishing-nets. The sap yields sugar, the green fruit milk, the ripe fruit solid food; while from the kernel they obtain rich cocoanut-oil for their lamps and hair. Surely, of all the gifts that Mother Earth bestows upon her children few are so well appreciated as the palm.

NATIVE HOUSES.

We found that the native houses were built of sun-dried mud, solidified with bamboo plaiting, and had neither windows nor chimneys. All were exceedingly primitive and, I regret to add, not very clean. O Japan! Japan! As we travel through other Oriental lands, how we appreciate thy neatness! Some of the younger inmates of these structures wear the costume of Eden; but the adults are, considering the climate, tolerably clothed; yet if it ever comes to a choice between a garment and a piece of jewelry, the Hindu always takes the gem. A child, if its parents can afford it, will be adorned with bangles, anklets, and medallions before it gets a shirt or a petticoat. And, if this is the case among the poverty-stricken natives, it is easy to imagine to what an extent ornamentation is carried among those who can afford to gratify their love of it. A young girl of a wealthy family looks like a walking advertisement for a jewelry shop. Aside from the display of beads in her hair, her neck and breast are almost covered with medallions, necklaces, and pendants made of brass or silver; while her ears are pierced, not only in the lobe but through the tops and sides. The ears of some are drawn completely out of shape by the weight of these ornaments. Usually, also, there is inserted in one nostril a flat gem like a star of turquoises, and in the other a gold ring; while from the cartilage above the lip, and sometimes from the lip itself, is hung a hoop of silver. Under these circumstances it is perhaps fortunate that in the Orient the art of kissing is unknown.



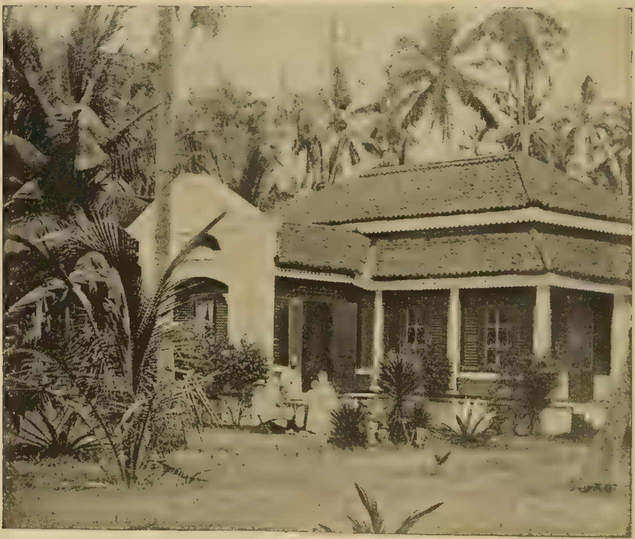
A CEYLON FAMILY.

To appreciate the full extent of an Indian woman's decorations, one must behold her foot; for her toes are quite as richly ornamented as her fingers, while around her ankles are bangles of such weight as to be burdensome in walking. Yet, so dearly do Hindu women love their ornaments that they will hardly take them off at night, preferring to go about their household work clanking with bracelets and ablaze with gems. Indian widows, however, are prohibited from wearing ornaments. Hence, though the days of burning them alive upon their husband's tombs have passed away, Hindu widows still have their trials.

NOT NEAT, BUT GAUDY.

The residences of foreigners in Colombo are called *bungalows*, and are only one story high, with airy rooms and deep, broad porticoes, almost as spacious as the house itself. Around them is invariably a grove of palms, and, as we drove along, we saw, among these shafts whose fringes rustled in the breeze, attractive groups of white-robed figures, apparently enjoying life amid the most delightful conditions.

The natives say that "Ceylon is only forty miles from heaven," and even the foreign residents call it "paradise." In fact, the loftiest mountain on the island bears the name of "Adam's Peak," and a hollow in the summit is said to have been made by Adam's foot when he stepped from Eden.


A BUNGALOW.

Ceylon certainly has enchanting qualities, yet here the sun must be as much avoided as the Evil One, and while the original Paradise possessed but one serpent, this lovely island has a million. A common sight, therefore, is that of natives worshiping deities in the form of snakes, in order to propitiate their wrath. The majority of those who die from snake-bites in India are peasants, whose naked limbs and feet are exposed to attack while working in the fields. No other country in the world affords such opportunities for snake stories, but I shall confine myself to facts. They are sufficiently sensational. According to the official reports more than nineteen thousand human beings died in India in 1892 from snake-bites.

FOOT OF AN INDIAN PRINCESS.

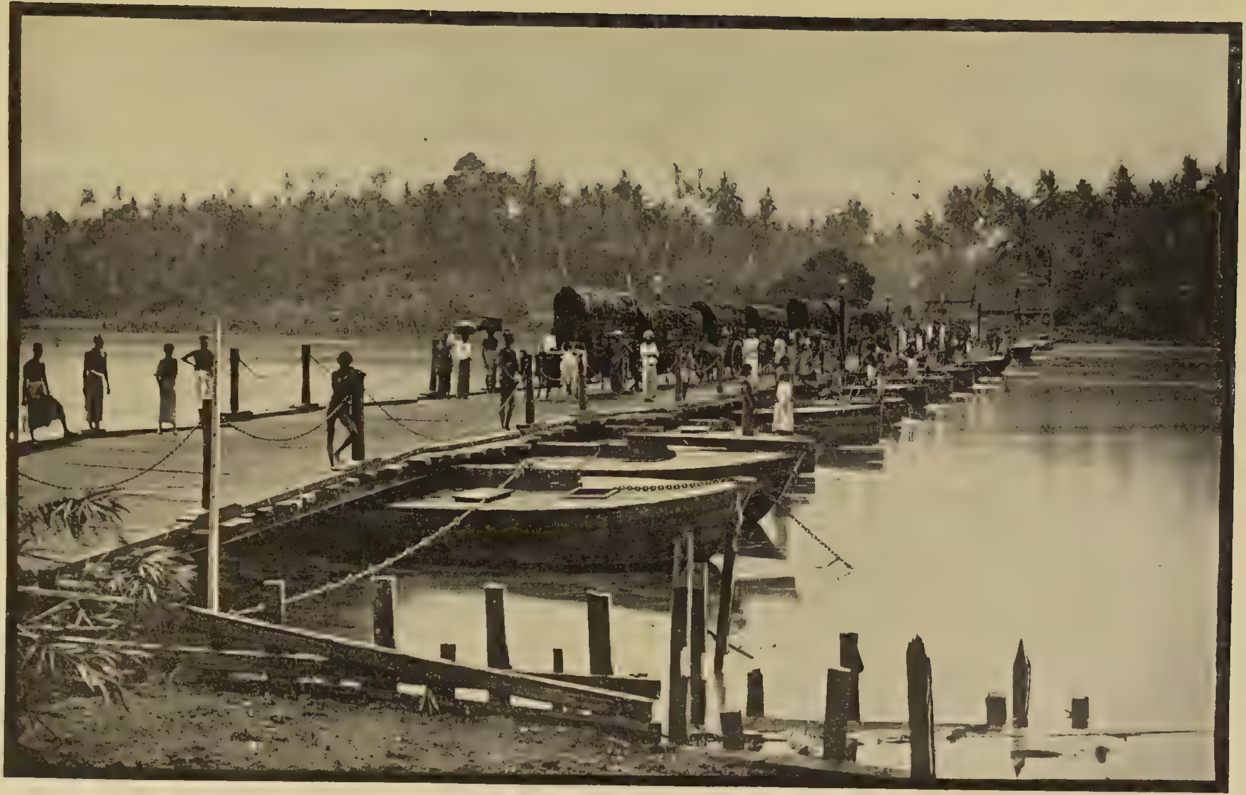
When I had recovered my breath after reading this, I lost it again, on learning that during the same year nine hundred and forty-seven people were destroyed by tigers, two hundred

IN COLOMBO.

and sixty by leopards, one hundred and eighty-two by wolves, and that more than eighty thousand head of cattle had been killed by serpents or wild beasts. Nor are these figures exceptional. In 1888, over twenty thousand deaths were caused by snakes and nine hundred and seventy-five by tigers. Rewards are offered by the Government for the destruction of wild beasts and reptiles; and in the case of tigers the result is good. No one is disposed to trifle with a man-eater. But such is the poverty of the people that these rewards cause the natives in many districts to go into the business of breeding snakes. Hence it remains a problem whether the remedy is not worse than the disease.

WORSHIPING SNAKES.

Notwithstanding these indisputable facts, during the winter months and on the regular routes of travel, the only tigers that I saw were kept in cages, and all the reptiles I beheld were those displayed by snake-charmers. These snake-charmers possessed for me a horrible fascination. They are as numerous in Indian towns as organ-grinders are with us,



A BRIDGE OF BOATS AT COLOMBO.

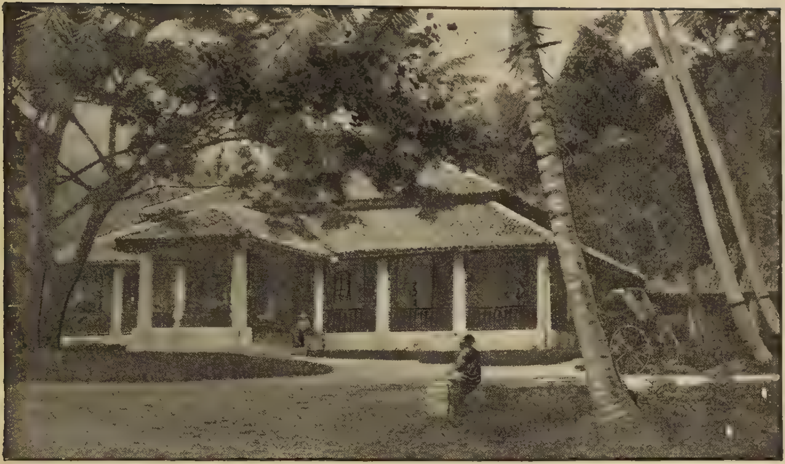
and at the door of every large hotel one of their exhibitions is going on from morning until night. Old residents of India, however, do not like to see them. The sight recalls to them too forcibly the dreadful summer months when, every morning, on account of scorpions, their shoes must be "well shaken before taken," and when (without any ground for being accused of having delirium tremens), they sometimes see a hideous reptile glide across the floor, or find, on turning down the sheet, a deadly cobra coiled up in the bed. Another drawback to one's happiness in Ceylon is the multitude of land-leeches which not only creep upon the pedestrian's body from the ground, but drop upon him from the trees. These frightful pests are, unless gorged with blood, only half an inch long, and so thin that they can make their way through a stocking without difficulty; but their bite is exceedingly irritating and blood flows freely from the wound. English soldiers in the Ceylon jungles have sometimes died from the bites of these diminutive but innumerable foes.

A MAN-EATER.

Hence Europeans in certain portions of the island wear what are called "leech-gaiters," made of rubber or hard cloth. These are drawn closely over the shoe and are fastened around the knee. Fortunately citric acid is ordinarily sufficient to protect one from these pests, and those who are obliged to do much walking in the lowlands, usually carry a lemon with them and moisten with its juice the parts of their bodies liable to be attacked.

A SNAKE-CHARMER.

Another unpleasant feature of this "paradise" is the dampness, which during the rainy season is so great that without the constant care of a "clothes-boy" wearing-apparel, books, papers, and household linen are quickly covered with a green-



A EUROPEAN'S RESIDENCE, COLOMBO.

ish mould. We were told that from May to October nothing can be kept dry here, and that the walls of the houses are covered with moisture. Such humidity combined with the tropical heat would seem to make the climate of Ceylon anything but paradisiacal.

After a few days spent in Colombo, we made a journey of four hours by rail to a far lovelier and cooler portion of Cey-

NATIVE DWELLINGS, COLOMBO.

lon, fifteen hundred feet above the sea, in the mountainous interior of the island, where is its ancient capital, Kandy. The railway journey up the mountains can never be forgotten.

The road itself, which is said to have cost the life of one native for every sleeper, is a triumph of engineering skill, frequently winding along the edge of cliffs from which the mountain falls away to a depth of fourteen hundred feet. Waterfalls, rushing downward to the valley, were often visible above us on the one side, or below us on the other, sweeping beneath the bridges over which our train moved in safety. In making the ascent, we noted with the keenest interest our passage from the tropics to a temperate zone, as evidenced not only in the vegetation but in the temperature. In subsequently descending to the coast, this experience was, of course, reversed; and leaving in the morning the health-resort of Nuwara Eliya on the summit, more than six thousand feet above the sea-level, where open fires had been appreciated, we watched the mercury gradually rise, till in the afternoon on our arrival in Colombo, we found that our thermometer indicated ninety degrees. The situation of Kandy is one of the most peculiar

THE MUSEUM, COLOMBO.

I have ever seen; for it is built around an artificial lake three miles in circuit, and sloping up from this on every side is a vast amphitheatre of enchanting mountains, covered with semitropical vegetation. Beyond these are extensive, rarely-visited uplands, where roam in herds the celebrated elephants indigenous to Ceylon. These animals are still so valuable as beasts of burden, that a fine of twenty-five hundred dollars is imposed for killing one, and about three hundred and fifty of them are exported to India annually, just as in past centuries. An afternoon drive over the splendid English roads constructed on these heights forms one of my most agreeable memories of the island.

TEA PLANTATION ON THE HILLS, CEYLON.

Ceylon is only fifty miles or so from India, and is about the size of Ireland. It has the form of a pear, detached from the great tree of which it formed a part by some

ON THE HEIGHTS.

geological action of remote antiquity. That tree was India. The heart of this delicious pear, concealed from all external view and touch, was the old capital, Kandy. In the same year that saw Napoleon defeated on the field of Waterloo (1815), the English conquered the last king of Kandy, and set this additional jewel in the British crown. Since then the population has increased from seven hundred and fifty thousand to nearly three million, and instead of sandy paths, twenty-five hun-

KANDY.

THE LAKE AT KANDY.

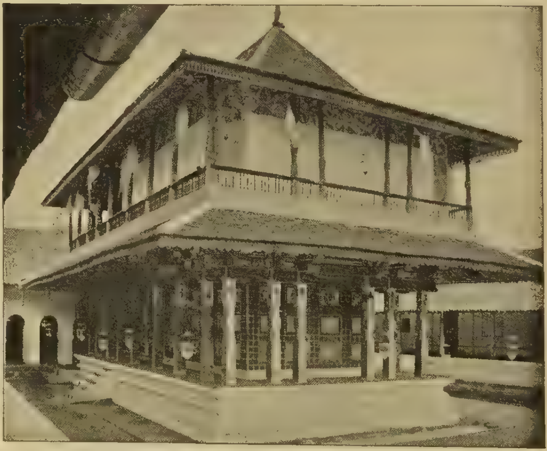
dred miles of well-made roads and nearly two hundred miles of railway have been built.

The period of British rule is, however, only a small fraction of the island's history. Amid the dense and dangerous forests of Ceylon are remnants of pagodas, palaces, and temples constructed centuries before the Christian era. Yet of the race which built them we know almost nothing. They hint to us of an antiquity as silent and trackless as the jungle which has smothered them. One thing, however, is certain: the race that flourished here when the population of Ceylon was probably twice as large as at the present time, must have been very intelligent; for on this island are the ruins of enor-

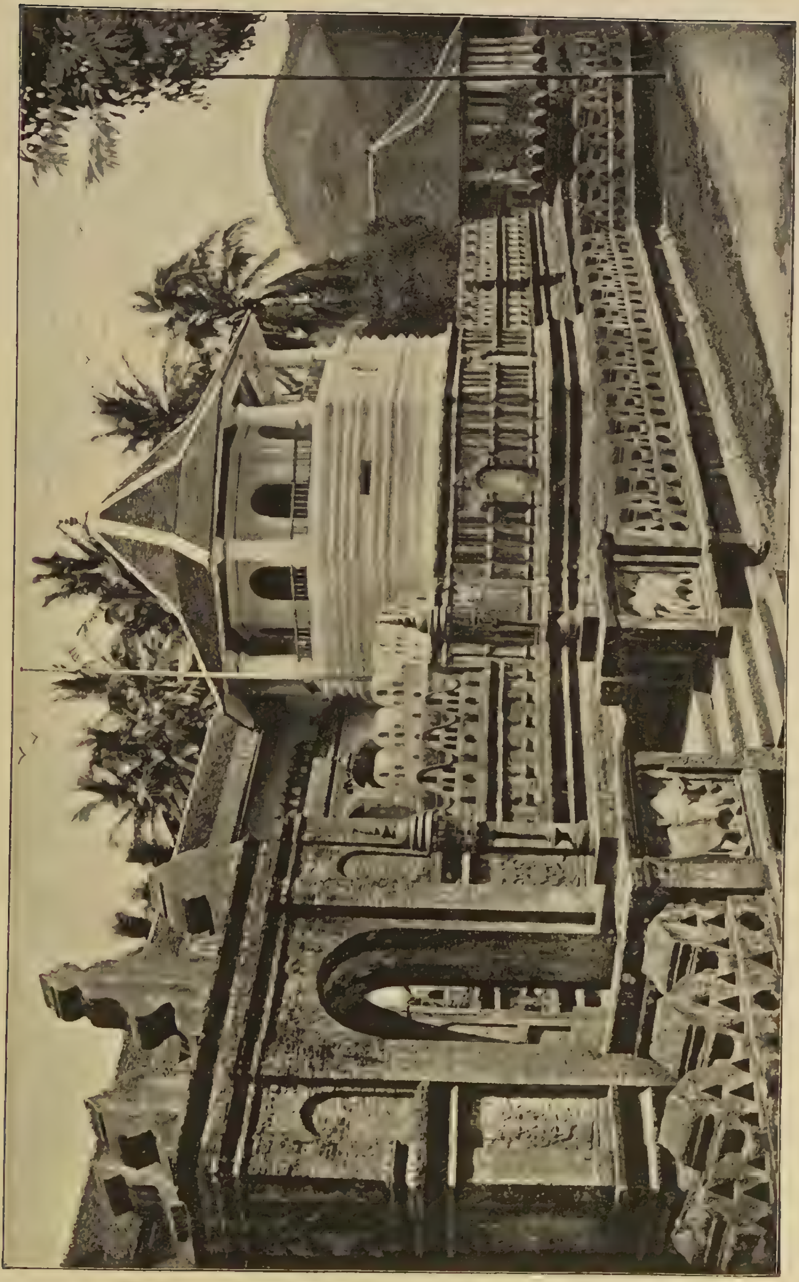
A LOVELY VIEW.

RUIN AND JUNGLE.

mous reservoirs, seven miles square, from which a network of canals brought water to the thirsty plains. In fact, the present governor of Ceylon is trying, after a lapse of twenty centuries, to restore these reservoirs to their former usefulness. But the most famous object here, and that which makes of Kandy a religious centre, is the old Buddhist Temple of the Sacred Tooth. It is an insignificant-looking building, grimy with age; yet the kings of Burma and Siam send yearly contributions for its maintenance, and Buddhist priests, even in far-away Japan, speak of it with the utmost reverence. This sanctity is due to the fact that it contains a relic said to be the left eye-tooth of Buddha, taken from the ashes of his funeral pyre, two thousand five hundred years ago. On



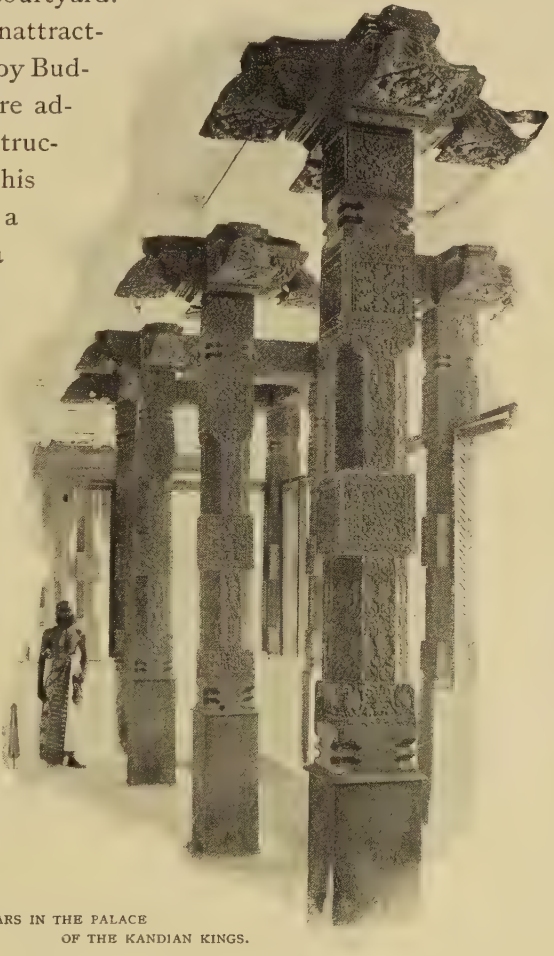
INNER TEMPLE OF THE SACRED TOOTH.



TEMPLE OF THE SACRED TOOTH.

rare occasions this is publicly exhibited—at a safe distance. Only a few distinguished foreigners, like the Prince of Wales, have been allowed to inspect it; but though it has been revered for more than two thousand years, it is well known that no human mouth could ever have contained it, for it is two inches long, and an inch in thickness, being, apparently, a piece of ivory from an elephant's tusk. Yet every year, in the month of July, a grand procession takes place here in honor of this wonderful tooth, reverenced by a third of the human race.

Passing through the outer gate of this temple, we found ourselves in a kind of courtyard. Around it were some unattractive buildings, inhabited by Buddhist priests. We were admitted into the small structure in the centre of this area, and saw behind a gilded grating, on a richly decorated altar, a golden bell three feet in height, and adorned with rubies, emeralds, and other precious stones. Beneath this outer bell are several smaller ones, and, underneath the last of all, resting upon a golden lotus, is the tooth itself. But that we were not permitted to see. Returning to the outer gate, we confessed to

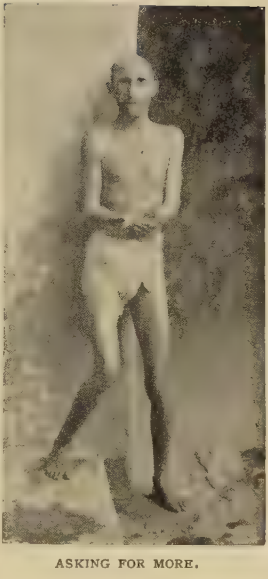


PILLARS IN THE PALACE OF THE KANDIAN KINGS.

each other that we were somewhat disappointed. We had expected a great deal of this Buddhist shrine, having just read Sir Edwin Arnold's "India Revisited," in which he speaks of the reception given him here by the priests, and even quotes *verbatim* the flowery speech they made to him, beginning, "O Poet!" Hence, though we had talked with one of the priests who had conversed with him, and though we had beheld a present from Sir Edwin to the temple, still we were far from satisfied, and could not bring ourselves to leave till we had witnessed the approaching "evening service."

A BUDDHIST SHRINE, CEYLON.

Presently the evening worshipers began to assemble; and one of them, the most persistent beggar I have ever seen, followed us about for more than an hour with outstretched hands. When finally the "service" began, I found, to my astonishment, that it consisted chiefly in blowing discordant



ASKING FOR MORE.

horns, beating drums, and marching round an altar loaded with sweet-scented flowers. This horrible orchestra led a procession of forty or fifty devotees, many of whom were blear-eyed and half-naked. Sir Edwin was more fortunate than I. Candor compels me to say that I would not have come in contact with a single one of these priests or laymen for even a glimpse of the sacred tooth.

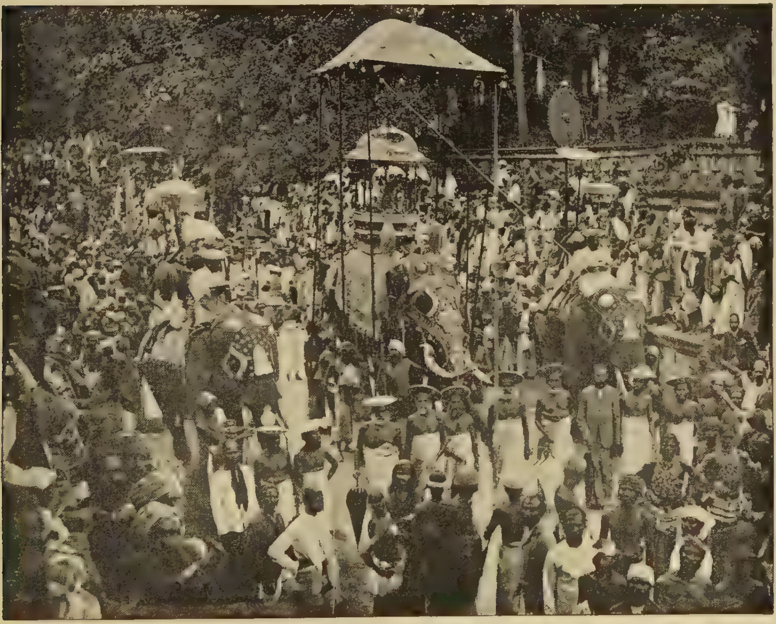
In saying this, I would not be misunderstood. I yield to none in admiration for the self-sacrificing life and beautiful moral precepts of Gautama Buddha. I reverence, too, the marvelous power of a man whose gentle deeds and noble words still hold in one religion, after twenty-five hundred years, nearly a third of the human race. But admiration for

A WAGON OF COLOMBO.

the teachings of its founder cannot conceal the fact that between Buddha and the ordinary Buddhism of to-day there is a heaven-wide difference. Of this the Buddhistic Holy of Holies in Kandy is a proof; and, since this has for its conspicuous features the gross imposture of the "Sacred Tooth," a half-barbaric style of worship, and an environment of dirt and beggars, we realize how polluted has become the stream which issued from so pure a spring.

A BUDDHIST ALTAR.

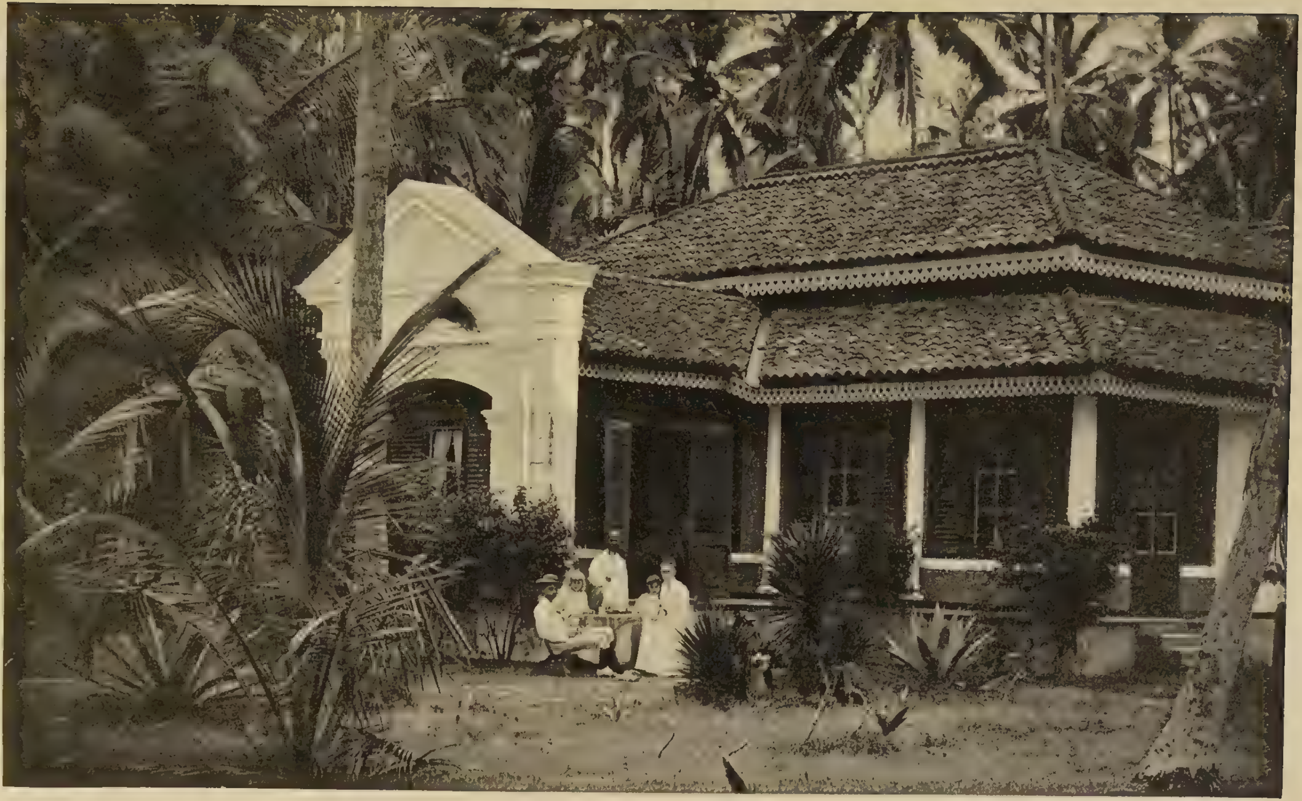
It is a remarkable fact that, however powerful Buddhism may be in Ceylon, in India itself it holds at present a very unimportant place. Under the inspiration of its founder, twenty-five centuries ago, it was a grand revolt against the tyranny of Hinduism, and at first seemed likely to replace it. But Hinduism rose again, vanquished its youthful conqueror, and finally drove it out of India. It found indeed a stronghold in the island of Ceylon, where it is still the dominant faith. But India is practically held to-day by Hinduism and Mohammedanism, the Buddhists, Parsees, Jews, and Christians being insignificant in comparison. Thus, in 1891, there were in India, in round numbers, two hundred and seven million Hindus, fifty-seven million Mohammedans, and only seven million Buddhists. Strange to say, both Buddhism and Christianity are outcasts from the lands where they originated—the one from India, the other from Judea; and both are flourishing best in countries far beyond the seas—Christianity in Europe and America, Buddhism in Burma, China, and Japan.



THE PROCESSION OF THE SACRED TOOTH.

Kandy possesses what is, undoubtedly, so far as arboreal cultivation is concerned, the finest botanical garden in the world. Its floral display is somewhat limited; but its vast park of one hundred and fifty acres contains more rare and interesting trees than I have elsewhere seen. Everything here is admirably arranged. Intelligent English-speaking guides, appointed by the Government, accompany travelers through the park and thoroughly explain its treasures. Perhaps the loveliest of its large variety of palms is that which has the shape of a gigantic fan; but there are also here the Palmyra palms, sometimes a hundred feet in height, and cocoanut and sago-palms, and one that always calls forth a romantic interest,—the talipat-palm, which blooms but once after a preparation lasting from fifty to eighty years. Then, having gained the object of its whole existence, it gradually dies,—resembling

ENTRANCE TO THE GARDENS.



A BUNGALOW IN CEYLON.

THE FAN PALM.

thus some human hearts, which are so absolutely given to one grand achievement or supreme affection, that when that is attained there remains nothing more for them in life. Yet that one glorious climax—like the wonderful florescence of the fronded palm — makes them contented to have lived, and ready, then, to die. We looked with astonishment on the clumps of bamboo growing here, each of whose stems is more than a hundred feet in height and nearly a foot in diameter. A man beside them seems a pigmy. A child might be concealed in one of their joints. Yet these were not bamboo

A CLUMP OF BAMBOO.

groves, but merely separate clusters, eighty feet thick, resembling with their graceful, feathery tops gigantic ostrich-feathers. Nor is the rapidity with which the bamboo grows here less remarkable than the size which it attains. By actual measurement it has been shown to increase in the rainy season at the rate of half-an-inch an hour, or a foot a day. We observed also with interest a specimen of bread-fruit, which in form resembles a melon, and weighs about three pounds. We learned that the trees which produce it bear fruit for nine months of the year, and that five or six of them will easily maintain a good-sized family. Here, too, we saw varieties of camphor and sweet-scented spice-trees. When the bark of the cinnamon tree was broken in our hands the odor from it was delicious; and when I plucked a genuine nutmeg and had cut it open, I realized how far I was from the State of Connecticut. My New York friend, however, was most elated when he had picked and tasted a fresh clove. "This," he exclaimed, "almost makes me homesick. It is the first time I ever ate a clove outside the Hoffman House!"

BAMBOO STEMS.

One of the most interesting objects to me in this garden was the famous sensitive plant, to which it seems almost impossible not to attribute feeling and intelligence, since, at the slightest touch on any part of it, the entire shrub contracts and shrinks from the intruder like a terrified child.

A SENSITIVE PLANT (OPEN).

A SENSITIVE PLANT (CLOSED).

In the hotel at Kandy I was presented to Arabi Pasha, the Egyptian revolutionary leader who, in 1882, issued a proclamation to his countrymen, that he was inspired by the Prophet to free the country of its foreign rulers. He adopted for his motto "Egypt for the Egyptians." But though he made a desperate struggle to achieve the freedom of his countrymen, his forces were defeated by the British at Tel-el-Kebir, and he himself was taken prisoner. He was at first sentenced to death, but this punishment was commuted to that of perpetual exile, and he was

BREADFRUIT.

sent to Ceylon. I found him to be a handsome, dignified man, very bitter in his feelings toward the British Government for having exiled him to this island, the climate of which he declared was totally unsuited to him. Within a few months, he said, he had been compelled to come from Colombo, where he had at first resided, to Kandy, in the hope of improving his health. "But life," he exclaimed, "has nothing more for me now. My country is enslaved, and I, alas! shall never look again upon the Nile."

Leaving Ceylon and its botanic wonderland, we found ourselves, after a delightful journey of three

AN INDIA-RUBBER TREE.

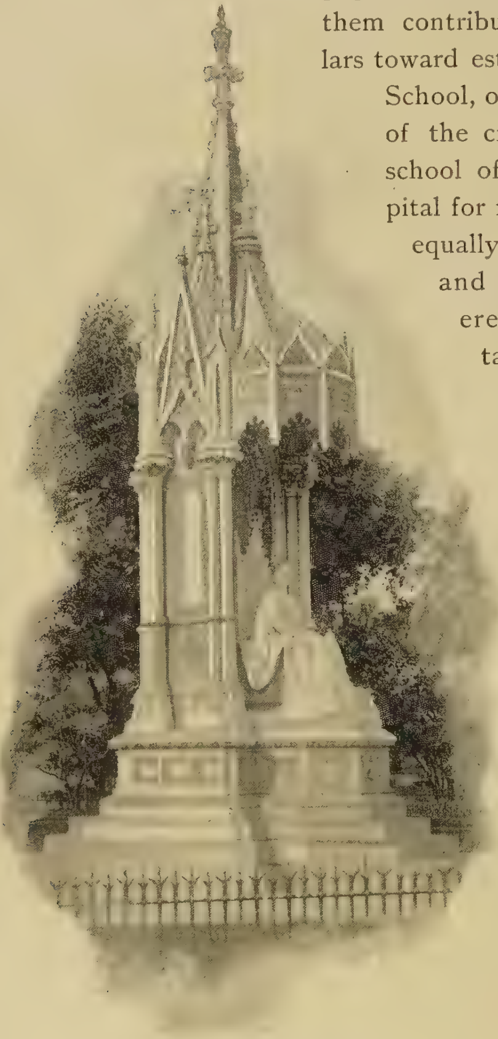
days, in the lovely harbor of Bombay. Those who can enter India at this point are fortunate. The first impressions of Calcutta are by no means so attractive. Calcutta, it is true, is called the "City of Palaces," but it is really Bombay that deserves the title, for it is not only the best built city in India, it is the finest modern city in the entire East. Even where the native population is in the majority there are many handsome residences, while its magnificent public buildings, built of finely decorated stone, are worthy to be compared with those of any European city, and its new railway station is probably the finest in the world.

IN THE BOTANICAL GARDENS, KANDY.

As we surveyed with admiration the noble structure known as the High Court, and other equally handsome specimens of architecture, we were reminded that one cause of Bombay's wealth was our own Civil War. Bombay grew rich when we were poor; for while our cotton crop was of necessity neglected, India controlled the markets of the world. It is true, her season of prosperity was of short duration, and the enormous profits then acquired now seem like fables of some golden age; nevertheless, Bombay then gained a great commercial impetus which she has never lost, and which the opening of the Suez Canal has made secure forever.

Many of the statues, schools, and public institutions of Bombay have been the gifts of that remarkable portion of its population known as Parsees. Thus, one of them contributed seventy-five thousand dollars toward establishing the Elphinstone High School, one of the most beautiful edifices of the city; another founded here the school of art; two of them built a hospital for natives; two others endowed an equally fine establishment for women and children; while another has erected several handsome fountains in the principal streets; and Parsees were most influential in giving to Bombay its beautiful marble statue of the Empress of India.

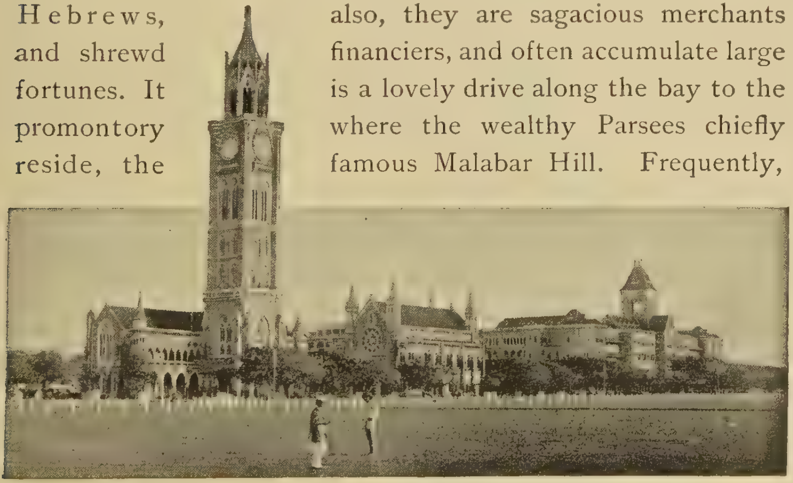
It is interesting to remember that these Parsees are entirely unlike both Hindus and Mohammedans. They are descendants of another race,— professors of another faith. Their prophet was the philosopher of Persia, Zoroaster. Their coming here is easily explained. About eleven centuries ago, the fol-



STATUE OF VICTORIA, BOMBAY.

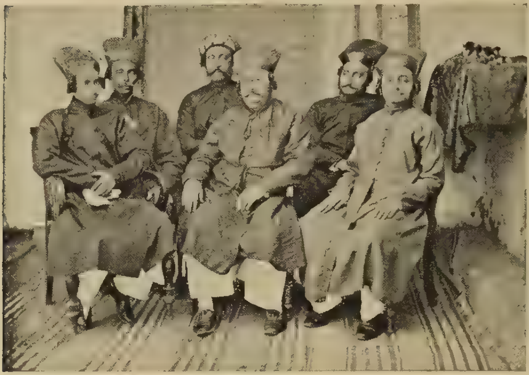
lowers of Mohammed, issuing from Arabia, swept round the Mediterranean in their path of conquest, till one point of their sparkling crescent pointed toward the Bosporus, and the other glittered star-like over the Spanish towers of Granada. Not satisfied with this, the Moslems hastened eastward into Persia,—giving the populace, as usual, their choice between the sword and the Koran. The most, of course, accepted the Koran. But some, intensely loyal to their fathers' faith, left Persia and fled into India. The descendants of those exiles are the Parsees of to-day. As they marry only among themselves, the purity of their race is preserved, and, like the Jews, they can be easily recognized by certain characteristics common to them all. Like Hebrews, also, they are sagacious merchants and shrewd financiers, and often accumulate large fortunes. It is a lovely drive along the bay to the promontory where the wealthy Parsees chiefly reside, the famous Malabar Hill. Frequently,

HARBOR OF BOMBAY.



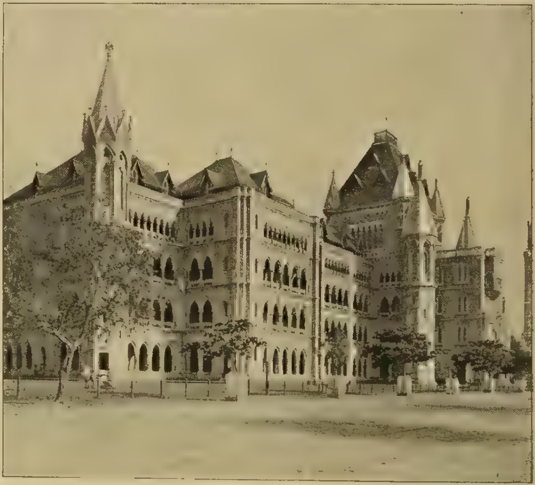
THE HIGH COURT AND OTHER PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

at the close of day, just as the sun was sinking into the blue Arabian sea, I beheld Parsees standing on the shore, facing the west, and apparently sending forth their evening prayer to the departing luminary over a rippling path of gold.



A GROUP OF PARSEES.

Parsees are called "Fire-worshipers;" but that is a name which they themselves repudiate. They are devout believers in one God, the symbol of whose glorious majesty is the sun,—that radiant, never-failing source of heat and light, without which our revolving planet, frozen to the heart, would soon roll through its gloomy orbit, lifeless and deserted. But this grand emblem of divinity is far too dazzling for mortal gaze; hence its immediate substitute on earth is fire. Who cannot understand this silent adoration of the Infinite, awakened by the contemplation of our own



THE ELPHINSTONE HIGH SCHOOL.

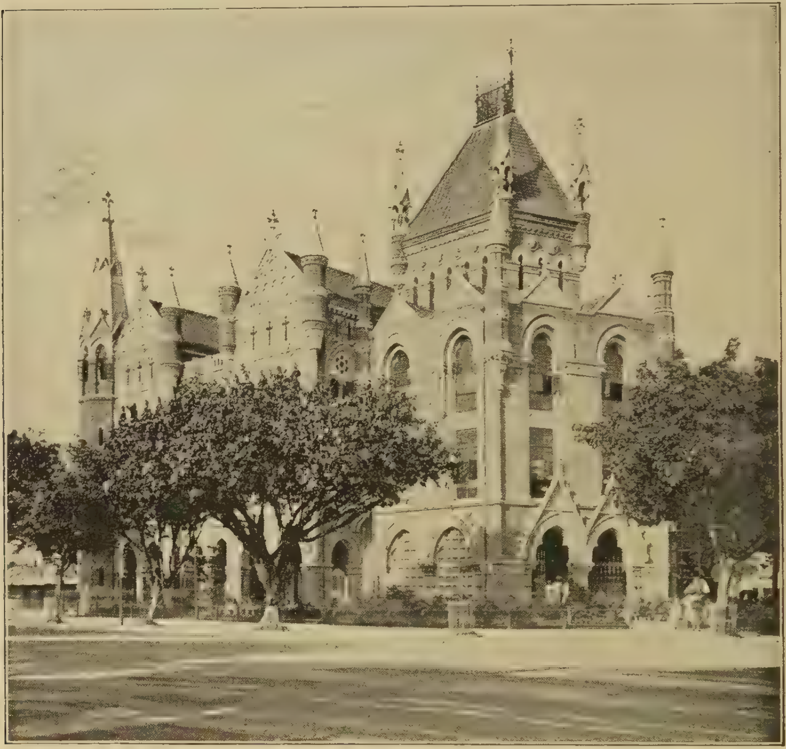
A CANAL.

ALONG THE SHORE.

and countless other suns, strewn broadcast through the shoreless ocean we call space? Compared with the sickening idolatry of Hinduism the Parsee faith is purity itself. It tolerates no images, and even its temples are entirely empty, save for the altar on which burns the sacred fire. This flame, which the attendants never suffer to expire, is really a continuation of the fire brought hither by the exiled Persians centuries ago.

THE DRIVE TO MALABAR HILL.

The Parsees are in some respects the best inhabitants of England's Indian Empire. They constitute, numerically, only about one-tenth of the population of Bombay, but their intelligence and enterprise have made their influence supreme. Some of them have been knighted for services rendered to the British Government. They are Bombay's wealthiest citizens and most important merchants; their deeds of charity are unsurpassed; they are all finely educated, and speak the English language fluently; they are thoroughly loyal to Great Britain; and (being a small minority, which under native rule might easily be crushed between the upper and nether millstones of Hinduism and Mohammedanism) they gain from England's liberal rule religious toleration and protection for their property.



PUBLIC BUILDING, BOMBAY.

One of the most interesting objects in Bombay, connected with the Parsees, is the place in which they leave their dead. Nothing offends the senses in the Parsee cemetery. Its situation is delightful. It occupies the summit of a hill in the most beautiful suburb of Bombay, and overlooks the calm Arabian Sea. On entering it, we first saw only a spacious well-kept garden, where blossoms filled the air with perfume. Amid these beautiful surroundings is a modest edifice where is preserved the Sacred Fire.

Passing by this, we perceived five circular structures, which we knew to be the celebrated "Towers of Silence." In view of the great wealth of the Parsees in Bombay, I had expected in these buildings something elegant or imposing. But here, as in their temples, everything is plain. In each case, only a curving wall was visible, twenty-five feet in height and ninety in diameter, covered with white cement and smooth as porcelain. The only decoration each possessed was seen along its rounded parapet, and even that was frequently disturbed. For all the figures there, so motionless and statuesque, were not in stone or bronze. They were alive,—a row of vultures waiting for their prey!

IN THE PARSEE CEMETERY.

After about an hour's time, we saw a funeral procession approach. The body was conveyed by venerable priests, arrayed in pure white robes. Slowly they bore their burden through flower-bordered paths toward one of the abodes of silence. There was no pageant ordisplay. None is permitted here. Within this area, rich and poor, noble and serf, mingle alike in absolute equality. Death is the only king who must be recognized. After some prayers had been recited, the mourners turned sadly away. When they had disappeared, the priests again took up the body, and, at the sight, the keen-eyed vultures left their perch and circled slowly through the air.

A TOWER OF SILENCE.

Within the circular wall of each of the towers, near the top, is an iron grating. On this the lifeless form is reverently laid. Then, with averted face, the chief priest draws away the pure white burial-robe and passes from the scene. At once the air is darkened by a hundred birds, swooping down to the grim feast before them. In fifteen minutes only the bones are left. These soon fall through the grating to a

WAITING FOR THEIR PREY.

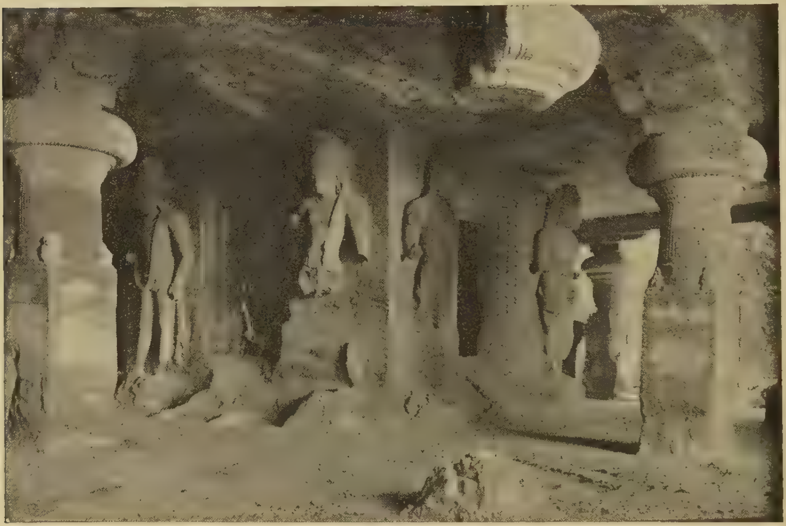
crypt below which is entirely open to the sun and sky. Horrible, do we say? It certainly seems so, and yet ideas in this respect are largely matters of education; and the intelligent Parsee thinks that burial in the earth or sea is far more dreadful in its consequences than to consign the body at once to the birds of the air.

One of the most extraordinary features of Bombay is its hospital for animals. Here, in a large and fairly well-kept area, we saw a multitude of emaciated horses; diseased cows; mangy dogs, apparently howling for liberty or death; hairless cats; dyspeptic looking monkeys; lame sheep; broken-winged birds; and even certain insects and reptiles—all of which here find shelter, food, water, and attention, till they recover or die. Both Hinduism and Buddhism strenuously inculcate kindness to animals, and the result is to make one-half of the human race vegetarian from principle, and merciful toward all dumb creatures. It is a question, however, whether it would not be better to put sick animals out of misery at once; but to the believer in the transmigration of souls, such conduct would seem little less than murder. In contrast to the cruelties inflicted upon beasts of burden in the Occident, the Buddhist way of treating "our dumb friends" is surely a rebuke to Christian nations. Like many religious tenets, however, this has been carried to an absurd extreme. Thus, millions in India will not even kill the parasites which infest

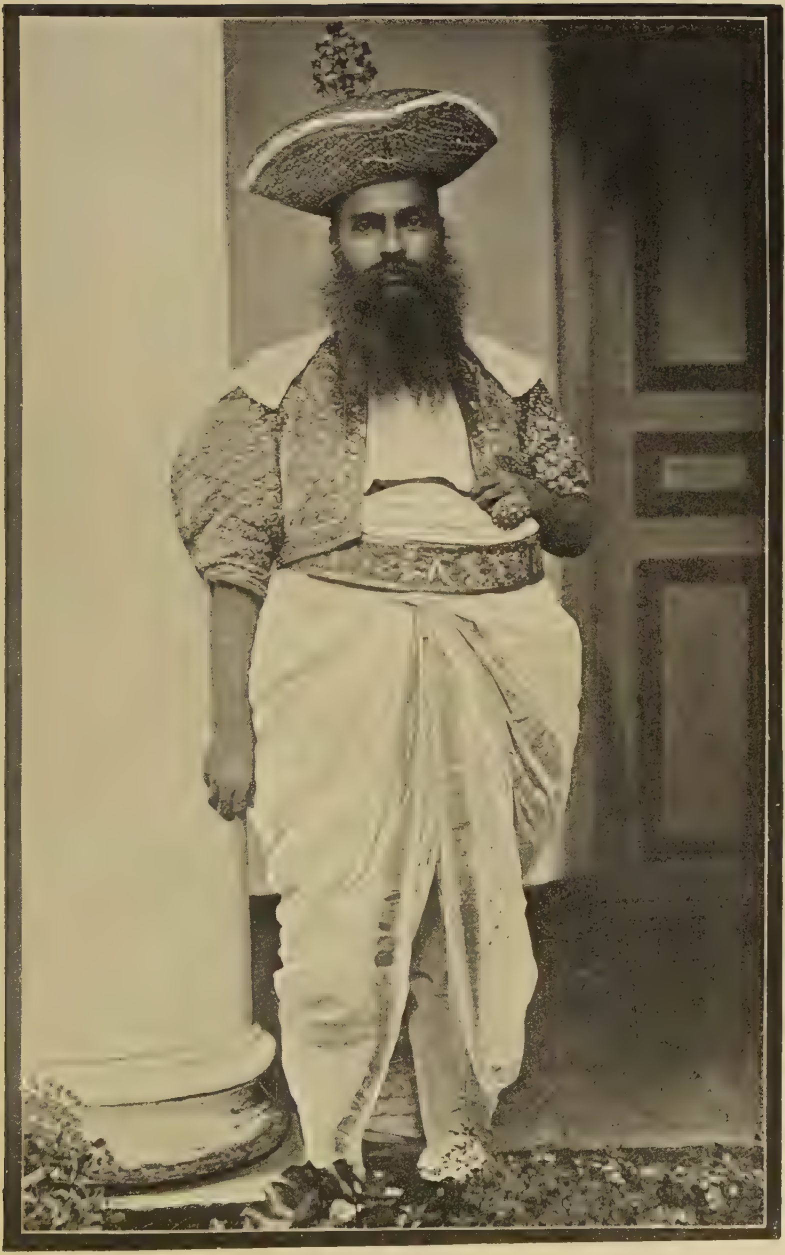
THE HOSPITAL FOR ANIMALS.

their bodies, but will remove them carefully and lay them to one side, as if to say: "Please try another pasture for a while; I need a little rest." There can be no doubt also that this extreme respect for animal life has enabled tigers, wolves, and venomous snakes to multiply in India, till they together cause a terrible mortality annually.

On the island of Elephanta, six miles distant from Bombay, we visited one of the many rock-hewn temples for which Hindustan is famous. There are about a thousand shrines in India excavated from the solid rock, in the form of caves, gigantic columns being left to support the overhanging cliff. These shafts are often fluted and elaborately carved, and on the walls huge figures were once sculptured in relief. In the cave of Elephanta, however, we found most of the statues terribly mutilated; for the Portuguese planted cannon before the entrance to the temple, and amused themselves by bombarding the forms of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. Although



ROCK-HEWN TEMPLE OF ELEPHANTA.



A FORMER RULER.

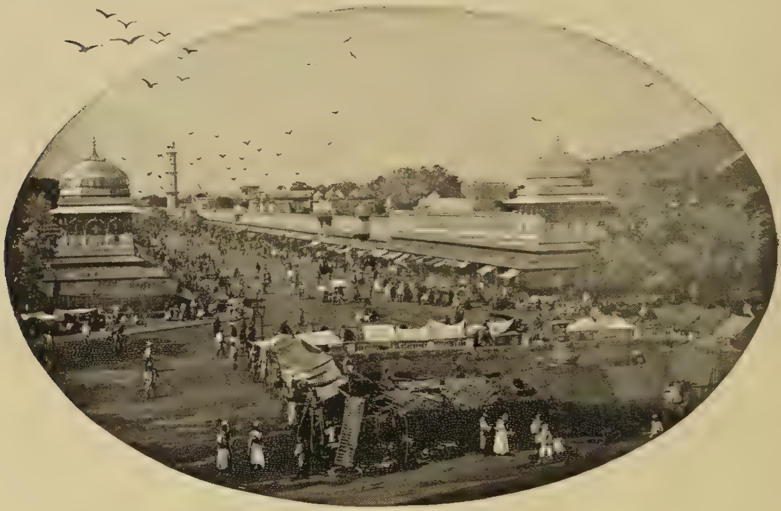
this temple is not the largest specimen of such rock-hewn architecture, its main hall extends into the cliff to a depth of one hundred and thirty feet, while the roof is upheld by twenty-six massive columns, and the statues cut from the cliff are from twelve to twenty-five feet high.

A HINDU DANCING GIRL.

The origin of this place of Hindu worship is lost in obscurity, but there seems to be little doubt that it is at least seven centuries old, and some of India's excavated shrines, the majority of which belong to the Buddhist faith, are believed to antedate the Christian era. To one who has seen the temples and tombs of Egypt, the resemblance between these structures is extraordinary; and it is possible that the idea was borrowed by the inhabitants of India from the dwellers in the valley of the Nile. At all events, it is not strange that this style of architecture became popular in India, for although involving immense labor, such temples cannot be destroyed by fire, nor will they crumble away with age, and in this torrid climate the temperature in such caves is always cool, since the fierce solar rays are totally excluded. Though mutilated, they have at least survived the terrible violence of

CONVEYANCES IN INDIA.

religious hatred, which again and again, under the names of Buddhism, Brahminism, and Mohammedanism, entirely destroyed most of the ancient temples in the north of India. The shrines of southern India were more fortunate, and although a little more difficult of access, will repay a visit, if only to remind one, by their wonderful dimensions and elaborate carving, of the old vanished shrines of Delhi and Benares.



MARKET-PLACE, JEYPORE.

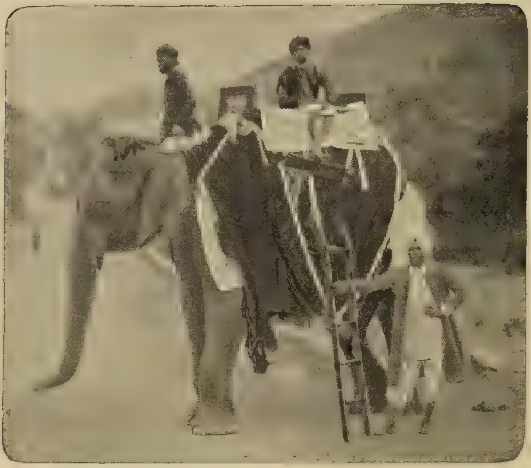
From Bombay we journeyed northward to the still more picturesque and Asiatic city of Jeypore. On entering its principal square, I at once exclaimed: "This is, at last, the India of my imagination; not Anglicized by foreign associations, like Bombay, but a bright, animated picture of the Orient, gleaming with all the colors of the rainbow, both in dress and architecture, and thronged with an astonishing variety of races, costumes, and complexions."

We lingered for an hour in the busy market-place, absorbing, with the keenest interest, the gay and novel sights around us; and yet so rapidly did they pour in upon this stage from north, south, east, and west, that no one brain or memory could grasp them all. In one place the great square seemed paved with pigeons, which flew about us with perfect fearlessness born of the certainty of never being harmed; for animal life is sacred in India. Occasionally camels stalked by with stealthy tread, a leer upon their scowling faces, as if they would say, if they could, "What have you in the Occident to equal this?" On the roofs of many of the neighboring buildings sat wild peacocks, resembling sculptured birds of paradise; and amid curious Oriental vehicles, Arabian horses frequently pranced by, ridden by officers of the Maharajah.

SACRED ANIMAL LIFE.

A SCENE IN JEYPORE.

But most astonishing of all were the huge elephants, which frequently appeared with loads of people on their backs, as naturally as London omnibuses. It seemed as if a part



A TRAVELING JUMBO.

of Barnum's "Greatest Show on Earth" had suddenly broken loose. Some of these animals were as large as Jumbo, others were tattooed in various colors, and not a few were gorgeously caparisoned with gold and velvet. Moreover, as their cushioned feet give forth no sound, most of these elephants wore rows of tinkling bells about their necks, in order to give warning to people in the streets.

A sudden desire seized us to mount one of these beasts and take a ride; but to climb to the high-perched seat, even while the elephant stood still for a moment, seemed quite as difficult as for a pilot to ascend the rope-ladder at the side of an ocean steamer. Seeing our perplexity, the driver uttered a command, and the intelligent monster gradu-

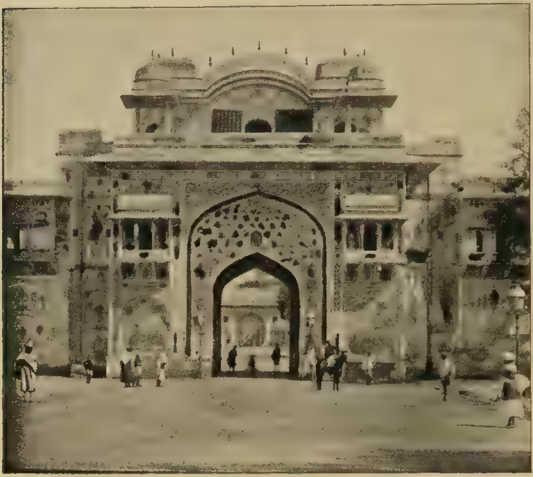
WAITING FOR PASSENGERS.

ally knelt until his back came within reasonable distance. Then, clambering up the steps, we took our seats. The earthquake shock which followed, as the ungainly pachyderm rose to his feet with two convulsive efforts, fore and aft, will always be connected in my memory with a storm at sea.

A love for elephant-riding must be an acquired taste. Until I rode upon the back of one, I never knew that when these huge beasts walk, they move both legs on one side at the same time. Seen from the ground, this seems a trifle; but on that undulating hill-top such a gait communicates itself without delay to the nerve-centres of your inmost being. While, therefore, I am glad to have added this to a long list of curious sensations, I shall be satisfied henceforth to see some other man enjoy it.

THE HALL OF THE WINDS.

The architecture of Jeypore appears as strange as the bright waves of Oriental life which flow between its walls. One singular structure filled me with astonishment. It is well named the "Hall of the Winds," for, in respect to architectural design, no one could tell "whence it cometh and whither it goeth." It is a wild, fantastic edifice, nine stories high, covered with pink and cream-colored stucco. One might compare it to a huge shell-cameo, beautifully tinted and delicately carved. I thought at first that it was ornamented here and there with bits of special color, but in reality what looked like points of emerald and pearl were living paroquets and pigeons, their brilliant plumage literally dovetailed into all the dainty pinnacles.



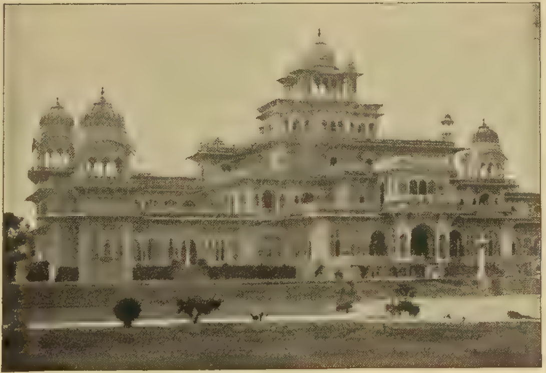
THE MAHARAJAH'S PALACE.

The Maharajah's palace also, though not remarkably substantial, is, nevertheless, exceedingly brilliant in appearance. In this respect it harmonizes with the situation of the man who lives in it. His so-called "power" is quite as showy and ephemeral as this painted stucco, and his entire kingdom is only about as large as the State of Massachusetts. England has various ways of dealing with these Indian potentates. If they resist and show themselves ungrateful for her gifts of civilization and Christianity, she quietly dethrones and pensions them. If they are quiet and appreciative, she sometimes let them play at royalty. There is always at their courts, however, an English resident, who acts as an "adviser."

Nevertheless, this kind of government has been of great advantage to Jeypore; for this bright town is as Oriental as an Asiatic prince would be, who, though retaining Eastern dress, had nevertheless been educated in Europe and had adopted many of its customs. Thus, all these streets, thronged with Arab horses, elephants, and camels, are lighted now by electricity.

Jeypore has also nearly fifty schools, in three of which eight hundred girls receive instruction,—a wonderful fact in native India. The Museum of Jeypore, which would do honor to any capital of Europe, stands in a public garden, seventy acres in extent. On this the Maharajah annually expends about fifteen thousand dollars. I saw no modern structure in the entire East which pleased me more; for its style of architecture is symmetrical and beautiful, and, after seeing so many stuccoed buildings, this noble edifice, constructed of variegated marble, delighted me with its solidity and genuine worth. Moreover, its treasures are of priceless value, portraying as they do most of the famous industries of India, from the brass-work of Benares to the shawls of Cashmere.

On leaving the Museum, our attention was directed to the Maharajah's fort, far up on the hill. There seemed to be a large inscription cut upon the cliff below its wall. By means of a field-glass, I found that this consisted of the one word "Welcome,"—a pretty compliment paid to one of the sons of Queen Victoria during a recent visit. But, being chiseled in the solid rock, the word remains there like a perpetual invitation. I wondered, therefore, whether, if some other conqueror should ever come, with promises to all these Maharajahs of a partial restoration of their territory, they would help him to drive the English out of India, and,



THE MUSEUM OF JEYPORE.

THE FORT.

if so, whether the inviting legend on the cliff would still read as it does to-day? Would such a conqueror be really "welcome?" Many in India answer "No," but others whisper "Yes."

Saying farewell at last to Jeypore, we made our way to one of the oldest and most interesting cities in the world,—Benares. This holy city of the Hindus was at the height of its prosperity at least a thousand years before the birth of Christ, and was already old when Plato taught in Athens and when the earliest Roman fortress rose upon the Palatine.

BENARES.

The first view that I gained of Benares from across the Ganges quickened my pulse and made me catch my breath, not merely from its

AN INDIAN TEMPLE.

great antiquity, but from the fact that to a vast proportion of the human race this is the holiest situation upon earth, raised spiritually as far above the ordinary abodes of man as the unrivaled summits of the Himalayas soar above the plains of Hindustan.

AMONG THE TEMPLES.

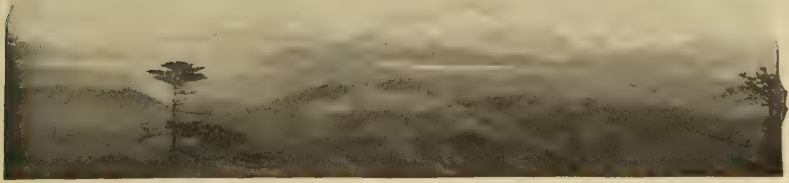
As the Hebrew still fondly turns to Jerusalem, as the Christian kneels adoringly at Bethlehem or at Rome, and as the Moslem crosses the scorching desert to prostrate himself at Mecca, so the Hindu makes his pilgrimage to Benares. Aye, more than this, since here it was, twenty-five centuries ago, that Buddha spoke those words of love which have so transformed the Eastern world, another great religion also claims Benares as its own; and since the Buddhists and the Hindus, combined, form fully seven hundred millions of the human race, this ancient, temple-burdened city exceeds all others in the world in the vast numbers of its devotees.

THE GANGES.

The principal feature of Benares is the river Ganges, which surpasses all others in sanctity. Here, it is not the town that makes the river sacred—the river sanctifies the town. In Hindu courts of justice witnesses take their oaths upon the water of the Ganges, as those who testify in our courts do upon the Bible. To the thoughtful traveler it is a memorable epoch in his life when he first stands beside the Ganges. Other great rivers have, perhaps, more fame; some, like the Tiber and the Rhine, have been

THE SACRED RIVER.

politically more important; others again, like the Nile, have been deified and worshiped; but none has ever gained the place which this mysterious river holds, and for three thousand years has held, in the estimation of countless millions. Its source is in the Himalayas, the awful habitation of the Hindu Trinity. At their command it issues forth, to call to life and verdure the vast Indian plains which otherwise would wither beneath the scorching sun. Then, after a course of fifteen hundred miles, having fulfilled its mission, its waters mingle with the boundless sea. But even this is not the end, for all its precious drops are thence drawn upward by the sun, and brought once more in clouds of gold to the resplendent dwelling-place of Brahma. Thus is the river emblematic of the Indian idea, that every human soul is in reality a tiny part of the divine, which, passing through existence as the Ganges passes through these burning plains, completes at last its mighty cycle from infinite to infinite, from God to God.



THE DWELLING-PLACE OF BRAHMA.

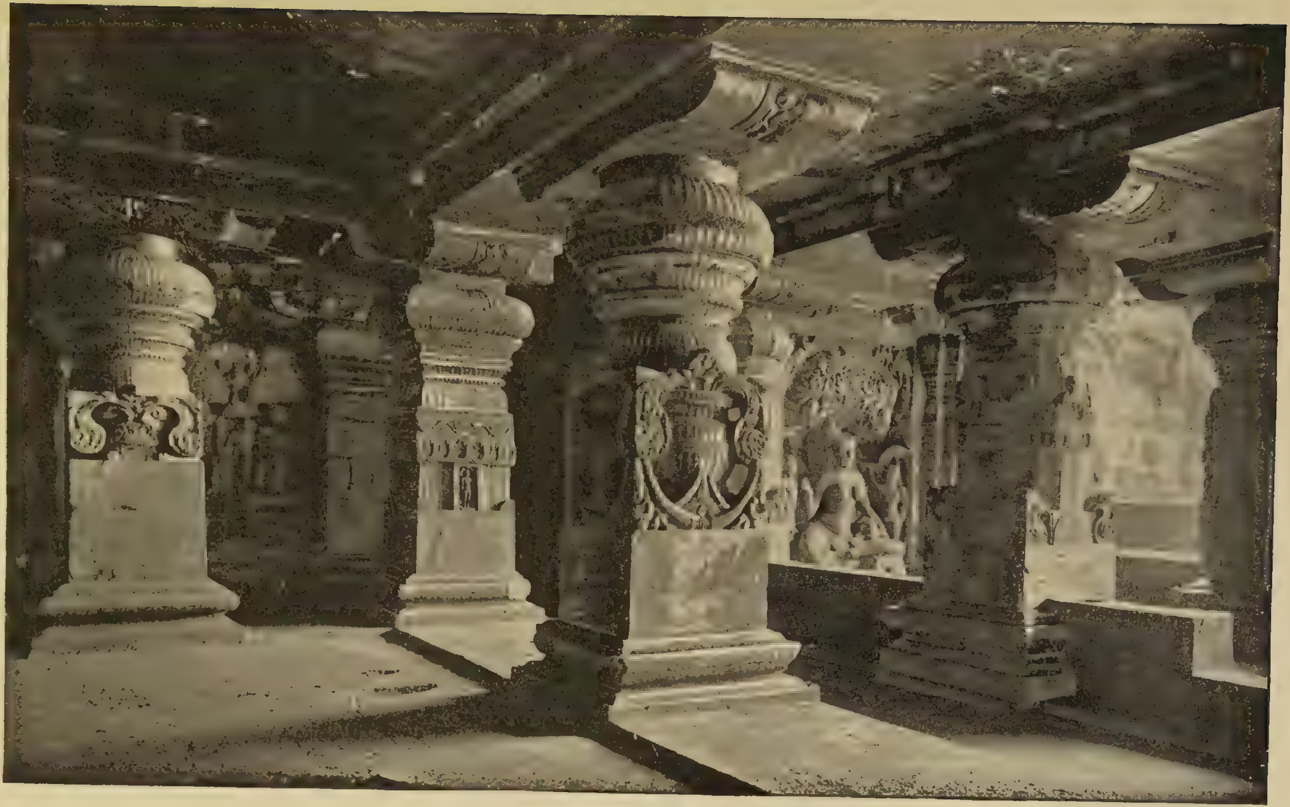
It is a remarkable fact that, though the Ganges itself is so sacred, the two banks which it divides here are as unlike as Paradise and Hades. One holds a stately city, three miles long, revered and visited by millions. The other is a sandy waste, shunned by the natives like a place of pestilence. Upon the northern shore the Hindus long to die, for thence they go at once to heaven; but they believe that any one who expires on the southern bank will, in the subsequent stage of his existence, be a donkey. The priests, however, have a ready device for this calamity: they issue a kind of accident policy against the chance of death on the unlucky shore, by saying that those who make a pilgrimage once a year to a shrine some miles away, and above all give it a little money, will be exempt from asinine transmigration.

Engaging a boat, with natives to row us, we floated slowly down the Ganges. The sights here on its northern bank are almost indescribable. Imagine a panorama three miles long, which, as your boat glides down the current, seems to unroll itself before you. Put up your hands like opera-glasses to your eyes and look at any portion of it singly, and you might fancy it to be an elaborate theatre-curtain; for the background is a long, high cliff, covered with turreted walls and strangely pointed domes, ascending tier above tier from the broad river to the bright blue sky.

THE BATHERS IN THE GANGES.

Along the river-bank, in one unbroken line, descend broad staircases of stone, and on these steps stand, literally, thousands of Hindus, praying, conversing, meditating, bathing, or carrying away in jars the water of the hallowed stream.

As early as an hour after sunrise, I found these stairways



ONE OF INDIA'S ROCK-HEWN TEMPLES.

CARRYING AWAY THE GANGES WATER.

thronged with men, women, and children, clad merely in a wisp of cotton, yet mindful only of one thing, beside which all else in the universe was for a moment worthless,—their bath in the Holy Ganges; for they believe that its thrice-sacred flood will purify their souls, if not their bodies, and wash away all taint of sin.

ON THE NORTHERN BANK.

I speak reservedly of the effect which bathing here may have upon their bodies, for at Benares the Ganges is filthy in the extreme. Happily for the reputation of the Hindus this is not caused entirely by the blackness of their sins. Other more practical causes can be found. Sewers discharge their contents into the midst of all these bathers. Bushels of faded flowers, which have served as offerings in the temples, are cast into the river here and float in fetid masses on its sluggish surface. Moreover, among these rotting and offensive weeds are the remains of human bodies, which have been partially cremated on the shore. Add to this the fact that, all day long, thousands here cleanse their bodies and their clothing, and one can faintly comprehend the condition of the water. Yet every bather takes up in his hands some of this filthy, mucilaginous fluid, and drinks it. Even worse than this, beasts of burden carry away into the country gallons of this river-water, which finds ready purchasers; for, though the English Government provides here a good supply of filtered water, the people of Benares prefer to use the unadulterated "Holy Ganges," and come long distances to fill their jars with it and take it home. What wonder, then, that there is always cholera at Benares, and that this valley of the Ganges is a perfect laboratory of infection,—a paradise of microbes,—a constant source of danger to the Western world? In almost every instance where cholera has ravaged Europe, Asia, or America, its origin has been distinctly traced back to a starting-point in India, where it first appeared among the crowds of filthy, half-starved pilgrims to the Ganges.

THE PIERS AT BENARES.

Though there are miles of stone steps on this sacred shore, open to all comers, they do not at times afford sufficient space for the pilgrims, and wooden piers have in addition been built out into the stream. Selecting one man on the spot for observation, I saw him dip himself completely three or four times; then he took up a little of the water in his hands and drank it; and, finally, pinching his nose between his thumb and forefinger, he held his breath as long as possible while mentally repeating the name of God. The only part of this performance that I could really understand was the necessity of holding his nose! Most of the men, and many of the women here, had their heads closely shaved, for they are told that for every hair thus sacrificed they will secure a million years in Paradise.

CREMATION AT BENARES.

Conspicuous among these places for ablution was a mud-hole at the foot of a steep bank, between two broken flights of steps. So filthy and neglected did this spot appear, that I could hardly believe the statement that here are burned the bodies of all Hindus—rich and poor alike—who have the happiness of dying at Benares. "Happiness," I say; for to expire beside the Ganges is considered a sure passport to eternal bliss.

After minute inspection of these scenes during several hours, we landed at one point to see the so-called "Well of Purification." It is a tank, about thirty feet in depth, supposed to have been dug originally by the Hindu deity, Vishnu, and to be, even now, partially filled with his perspiration. After inhaling one good whiff from it, I was quite ready to believe the statement; for it absolutely reeks with the effluvia of rotten flowers and the impurities of dirty millions who bathe themselves in the well before they step into the sacred stream itself. Yet I saw at least a dozen people drink this loathsome liquid. Priests serve it out by the ladleful in exchange for money. A single swallow of that putrid

THE WELL OF PURIFICATION.

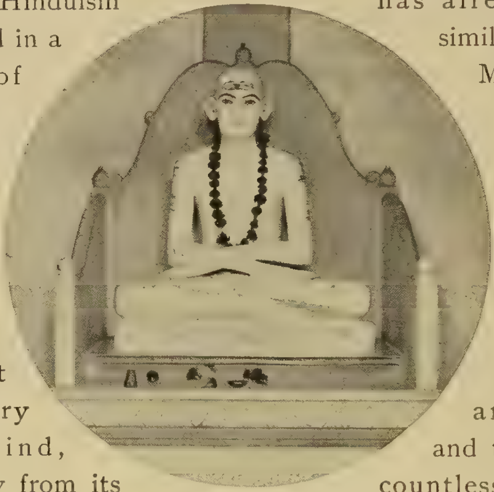
INDIAN SCENERY.

mixture, it is affirmed, is warranted to drive out every particle of sin from the vilest criminal on earth; and I must say, it appeared to me strong enough to do so.

I do not wish to make these facts unnecessarily revolting, but one must describe them in order to give a truthful picture of Benares. They are precisely what I saw, and what every tourist will see, if he explores this capital of Hinduism. Nor are these exceptional features, to be found with difficulty; they are the principal sights,—the important characteristics of Benares and its worshipers. All of the idols on the banks of the river are hideous; some are obscene; while a few are distinguished by the expression which one is apt to assume when the photographer asks one "to look pleasant." In all the narrow streets of Benares, one sees on sale thousands of idols, made of brass or stone, some of which are said to be manufactured in Birmingham, England. Many of those that have their origin in India are too disgusting to be illustrated, and some of the carvings on the temples of Benares are too vile to be described. Pictured and read of on the other side of the globe, viewed through the long perspective of a score of centuries, discussed in a transcendental way in a "Parliament of Religions," and

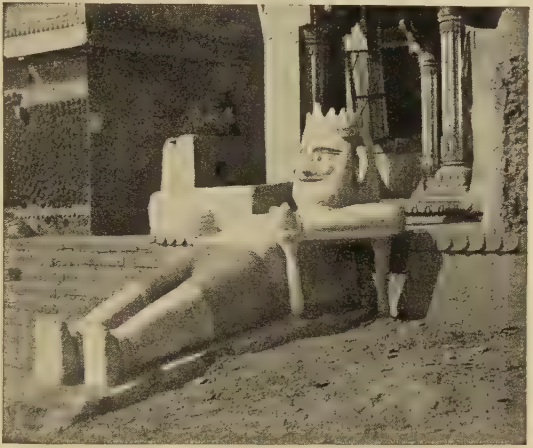
A PARADISE OF MICROBES.

judged of merely by its original sacred writings, the Hindu faith appears to some a fine and wonderful religion. Like all religions, it certainly has some fundamental truths. But scrutinize it practically, face to face, in India, and it becomes the most repulsive exhibition of idolatry, fanaticism and filth that one can well imagine; while the incessant demands for money made by the insatiable priests fill one with unspeakable pity for their deluded victims. The superiority of Parseeism to Hinduism has already been noted; and in a similar way the religion of Mohammed, compared with that of Siva and Vishnu, is purity itself; for Islamism, despite its sensual Paradise and creed of conquest, is at least free from all idolatry and images of any kind, and teaches five times daily from its countless minarets the worship of one God alone.



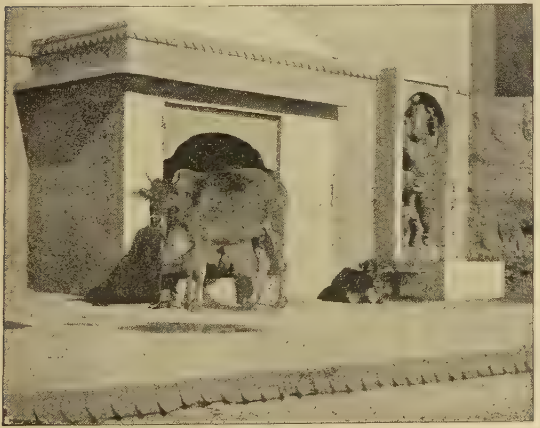
A HINDU SAINT.

"But how," the reader naturally asks, "can educated Brahmins, such as have recently been in this country, uphold and defend such a religion as Hinduism?" They do so by dwelling on its philosophical and metaphysical characteristics. Some of its sacred books, written thirty-five hundred years ago, are noble aspirations. Moreover, that early faith was free from the idolatry and caste which are its curse to-day. But how refined, intelligent men can have the slightest sympathy with the Hindu religion, as it now exists, is more than I can understand; for it should be carefully remembered that members of the very small society of the Brahmo-Somaj (which may be called a party of Unitarian, free-thinking Hindus) are not fair representatives of that great religion of Siva, Vishnu, Kali, and a thousand other gods, which holds within its cruel grasp two hundred millions of the human race.



AN IDOL ON THE SHORE.

One of the most famous temples at Benares is the shrine of Arnapurna, the patroness of beggars. No wonder she is popular in India! We could not, with any consideration for ourselves or our clothing, advance three feet beyond the threshold of this sacred shrine. Why? Because a multitude of sacred bulls and cows were wandering over the marble pavement, and most of the enclosure was filthier than a pigsty. Nor is this loathsome state of things confined to this one edifice. I walked repeatedly among the most revered and celebrated temples here, and these or similar disgusting

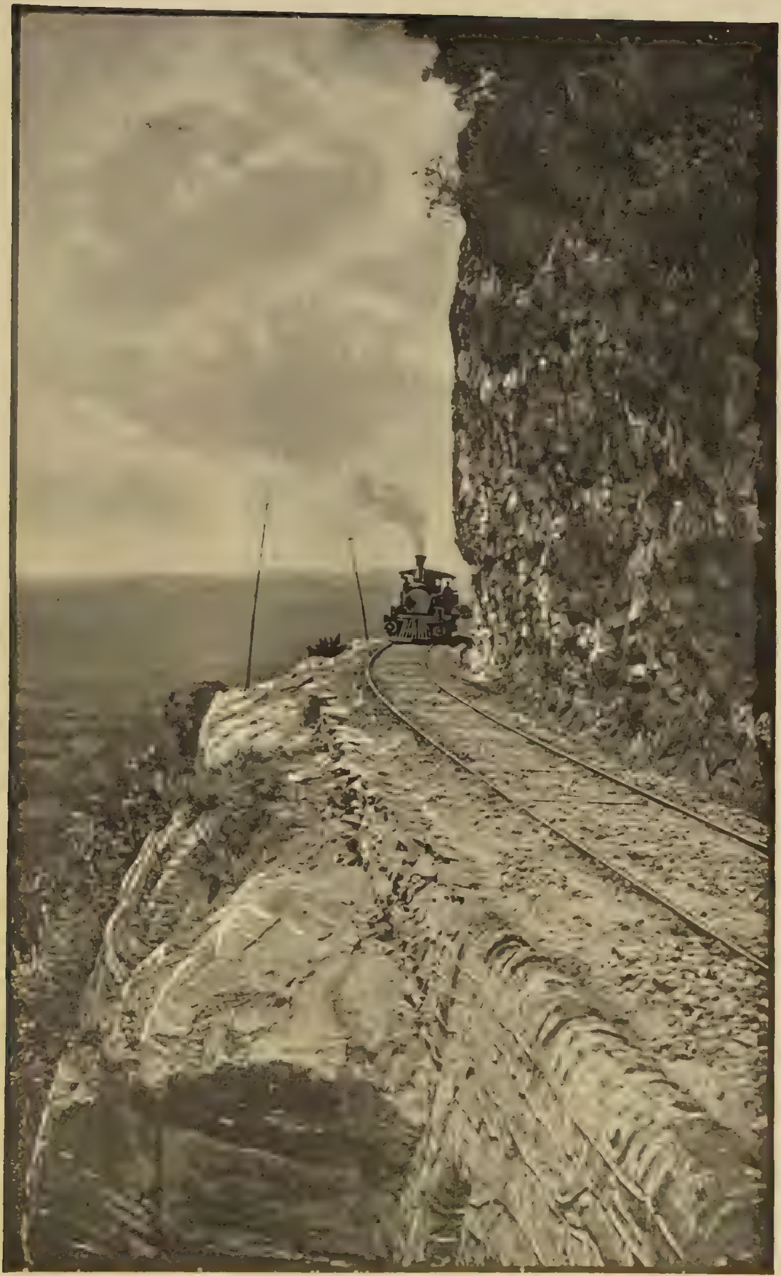


A SACRED COW.

features characterized nearly all of them. The singular part of the matter is, that to the assembled pilgrims we were spiritually just as vile as they were physically vile to us. Even the most repulsive of them shrank from us, as much as we from him; since, if a Christian or a Mohammedan touches a Hindu while engaged in his sacred duties, he must return immediately to the Ganges and take another bath.

ONE OF THE MANY.

The sacred bulls and cows that roam about the temples of Benares are the luckiest animals in the world. They are petted, as well as worshiped, all day long, their appetites being tempted constantly with every dainty dear to bovine taste, from fruit and clover up to rose-leaves and confectionery. They even stroll about the bazaar and eat whatever they fancy in the traders' stalls. Around their necks and horns garlands of fragrant flowers are often hung. Some of these creatures, however, are diseased; yet, since it is a crime to kill them, they wander about here with the rest. But in these narrow streets, forever crowded with humanity, such animals are horribly obnoxious, and the bulls are often dangerous. So true is this that, some years ago, the British authorities hit upon the scheme of kidnaping a few of them at a time and turning them loose into the jungle. Once there, they never returned; for Indian tigers, so far as heard from, have no religious scruples about eating meat. It is not enough, however, to let sacred animals stroll through the streets and temples of Benares at their own sweet will—some

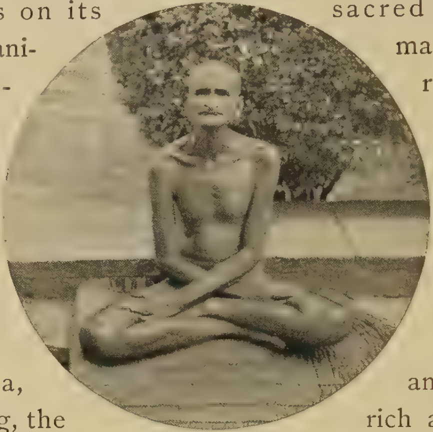


SENSATION ROCK.

of them even have sanctuaries of their own. We visited, for example, what is called the Monkey Temple. It is a rather handsome building of red sandstone, situated in a grove of stately trees; yet this is the home and playground of five hundred monkeys, all thought to be divine, since they are representative of Hanuman, the monkey god. Attendants sold us cakes and nuts with which to feed these apes, and soon a mob of long-tailed, simian deities were gathered round us. Whole families at a time were represented,— from old asthmatic grandfathers, who looked sufficiently wise to be the ancestors of Darwin, down to the younger generations, who seemed horribly human as they blinked their eyes, fought and chattered for the sweetmeats, and pulled each other's tails in a most ungodly manner. The Hindus worship monkeys, and the Chinese eat them. I hardly know, if I had to choose, which I should prefer to do!

A BRAHMIN AND HIS ATTENDANT.

Heart-sick from an inspection of these temples we turned to study a few of those who came to worship here. Despite their personal unattractiveness, these people rivet attention and awaken thought. They are a part of that vast caravan which for at least thirty centuries has been marching with unbroken ranks toward this mysterious river and its hallowed shrines. It has been estimated that from three to five hundred thousand people assemble annually at certain localities



A FANATIC.

on the Ganges. The long procession never stops. Its coming is as certain as the stream itself. Its individuals disappear like bubbles on its sacred waves, but neither the animate nor the inanimate current ever fails,—one sweeping on to lose itself in the boundless sea, the other hastening toward that shoreless ocean which we call Eternity. These pilgrims come from every part of India, and include the old and young, the rich and poor, the strong and the infirm. Some, in this age of progress, come by rail, packed, cattle-like, in third-class cars; but many must still make the pilgrimage on foot, toiling for months on dusty roads beneath a burning sun, and begging by the way for sufficient rice and water to sustain them. Some poor fanatics actually cover spaces of from five hundred to seven hundred miles by marking off the distance with their bodies on the dusty ground, as we would measure it with a five-foot pole. Thousands of aged men and women who start upon this pilgrimage, never see their homes again; but this to them is nothing, if they can only hold out long enough to bathe their trembling limbs in the hallowed Ganges.

A FEW PILGRIMS TO THE GANGES.

Then they are satisfied to die. Formerly Hindu parents used to throw their children into the river to propitiate its deity; but this is now forbidden by the British Government.

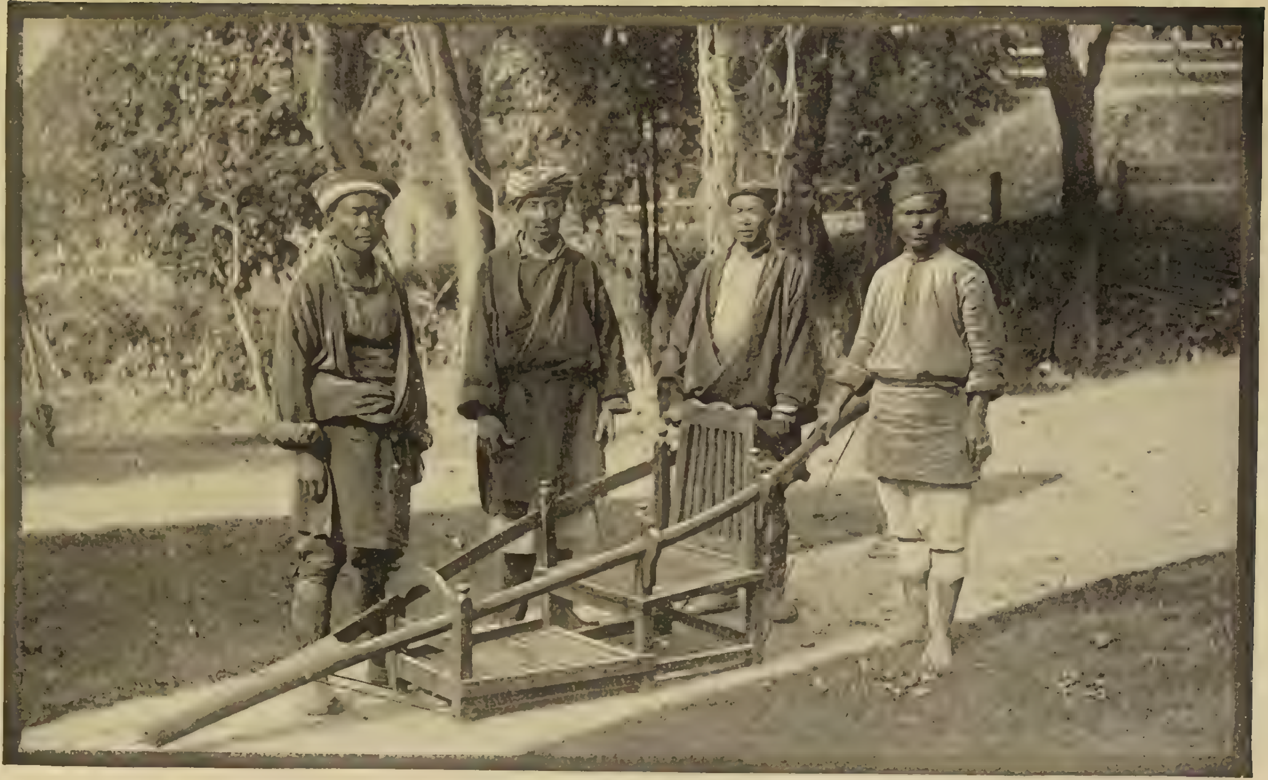
We saw at Benares one of the old cars of Juggernaut. I was surprised to find it a comparatively light vehicle; but I was told that, when loaded with heavy idols and numerous priests, it would quickly crush the life out of any victim who cast himself beneath its wheels,— a mode of suicide now prohibited by the English. The one redeeming feature in these scenes of superstition and idolatry is the terrible sincerity behind them all. Of course, there are among these people many impostors, and Hindu priests are always trading on the fears and the ignorance of their deluded victims. But where the hypocrites may number perhaps fifty thousand, there are in India to-day one hundred and ninety million Hindus, striving by tears and sweat and blood to win the favor of their gods. Life is to them a desperate struggle to escape from future suffering—a struggle as intense and agonizing as that by which a man, imprisoned in a railroad wreck, endeavors to free himself from the approaching flames.

A CAR OF JUGGERNAUT.

Nowhere on earth are such appalling sacrifices made by religious devotees as in this valley of the Ganges. Some stand for months and years with an extended arm until it withers and becomes immovable; others will clench the hand until the nails grow through the flesh; some hang from hooks inserted in their backs, or leap through sacrificial fires, while others still live destitute and naked like wild beasts. A religious faith which can inspire fortitude to endure sufferings like these, is, no doubt, cruel and degrading; but it is at least sincere. Hence, Hinduism is the most important fact the Government of India has to deal with; for it controls nearly two hundred million people in the most minute details of life.

SLAVES OF SUPERSTITION.

I do not know of any race on earth which fills me with such pity as this race of India. One hundred and fifty millions of them live in hovels. Thousands, no doubt, are always suffering from the pangs of hunger. With either too much or too little rain, the lives of millions are endangered. In 1876, in spite of the expenditure by the British Government of fifty-five million dollars, five million natives died in India from famine, or more than the entire population of the State of Pennsylvania. From carefully prepared statistics it is estimated that in the district of Bengal thirteen millions are always half-starved; and that in the whole of British India, two-fifths of the people are fairly well off, two-fifths have to struggle constantly for an existence, while the remaining one-



CHAIR-BEARERS, DARJEELING.

fifth (at least fifty millions) are in a condition of chronic hunger. But even worse than this appalling poverty of the body is the thraldom of the soul. Nowhere else on earth does there prevail such social tyranny as has existed here for more than three thousand years, under the name of Caste. This is a system so gigantic in extent, and so deeply rooted in the prejudices of mankind, that now its code appears as insurmountable as the Himalayas and the dividing lines between the various castes as pitiless as walls of fire. If there were no other reason why the Hindu religion, as it exists, should be condemned, the fact that it has created and maintains to-day this monstrous system of oppression would be enough to make it utterly alien to all the noblest instincts of the human heart.

There are four principal castes in India, though these have countless subdivisions. The inventors of this social despotism were naturally the highest in the scale, — the Brahmins. They coolly tell the rest of the world that they sprang originally from the mouth of Brahma, the Supreme Being. Accordingly, no matter whether they are rich or poor, no matter what may be their occupation, the members of all other castes must yield them homage and obedience. Formerly, whatever crimes

A PEASANT.

they might commit, their personal property could not be seized. Even now their persons are sacred. The Hindus believe that if any one strikes a Brahmin, even with a blade of grass, he will be punished by being an inferior animal for the next twenty-one generations.

The other Hindu castes are, in the order of their rank, the warrior class, the merchant class, and the servile class, springing respectively from Brahma's arms, thighs, and feet. Below them all are the degraded Pariahs, who are casteless, and are regarded as almost too vile to belong to humanity. Can any thing be more discouraging than the hopelessness of this. As one is born in India, so he dies. These class distinctions are hereditary and inexorably fixed. No one can rise into a higher rank. Once a Brahmin, one is always a Brahmin; once a Pariah, always a Pariah.

A VILLAGE SCENE.

Few foreigners have any idea how extremely rigid and severe the rules of Indian caste can be. Nothing, for example, would induce the poorest Hindu to eat roast beef with the

ONE OF THE LOWLY.

Empress of India herself. He would believe that by partaking of it he would defile himself for time and for eternity. It is said that a European, from motives of revenge, once seized and bound a wealthy Brahmin, and, after a desperate struggle, forced some beef and brandy down his throat. As a result, although the Hindu had been clearly overpowered and made incapable of resistance, he was considered to be defiled, and lost his caste. Every effort was made to reinstate him, but for years in vain. Finally, after the payment of one hundred thousand dollars, the unfortunate man regained his caste, although, in addition to the fortune thus expended, he was obliged to submit to physical penalties too revolting to be mentioned. Lying, stealing, fraud, and adultery can be atoned for in India without loss of caste, but to eat of the "sacred cow" is for the Hindu the

ONE OF THE EXALTED.

unpardonable sin. Imagine, therefore, what would be the feelings of a Hindu who visited the stock-yards in Chicago, and saw an ox or a cow, to say nothing of other animals slaughtered every minute! Nor will a high-caste person allow one of low caste even to obtain water from his well. He thinks that thus the well would be defiled. If he saw a Pariah dying of starvation he would not go to his relief for fear of contamination. The penalties for being thus contaminated are terrible. A man who has lost caste is the most wretched of human beings. Even a Pariah is less pitiable. His property is confiscated to the caste from which he has been ostracized; his children no longer acknowledge him as their

UPWARD TO THE MOUNTAINS.

THE HIMALAYAS FROM DARJEELING.

father; his wife is freed from all her conjugal obligations; and even his father and mother would refuse to eat with him or to give him a morsel of food. Though the offense should have been accidental, the penalty is just the same; for the defilement has taken place, and cannot be effaced. Can we, then, wonder that this system of caste has broken the spirit of the people? The servile class will often ask a Brahmin to wash his feet in the water of the street, that they may then drink it. They take the ofttimes brutal treatment of Europeans without resentment; and instances are known of natives coming to their English masters, when they had a special favor to ask, with grass in their mouths, saying that they were their beasts.

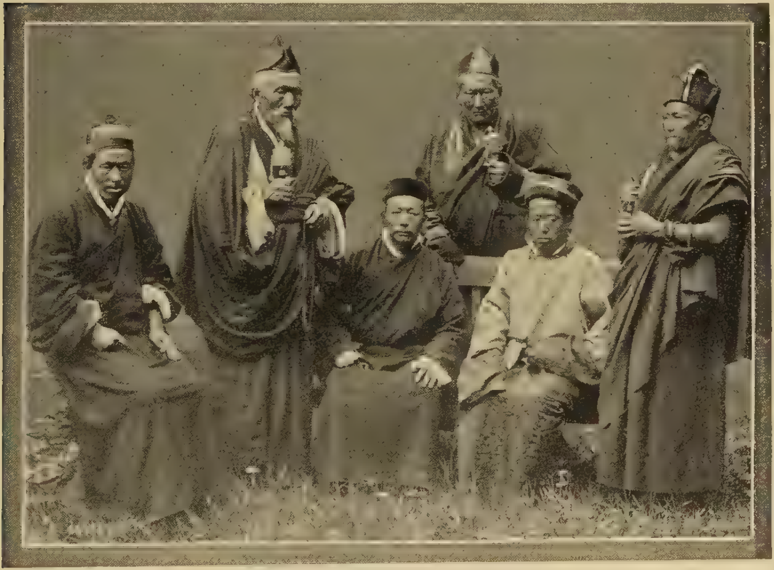
UP IN THE CLOUDS.

Only a few miles from Benares stands a ruined tower, which marks the spot where twenty-five hundred years ago Gautama Buddha led a revolt against this tyranny of the Brahmins. He welcomed his disciples from all classes, exclaiming: "As the four rivers which flow into the Ganges lose their names so soon as they have mingled with that holy stream, so all who believe in Buddhism cease to be Brahmins, Pariahs, or Sudras, and become brothers.'' He made religion to consist of love and kindness to all living beings. All tests of rank were merged by him into the one test of character. Here, then, upon these plains of India, was fought out the great conflict between selfishness and love. Alas! the old, deep-rooted despotism proved the stronger, and Buddha's Christlike doctrine of the brotherhood of man was driven into other lands.

MARKET-PLACE, DARJEELING.

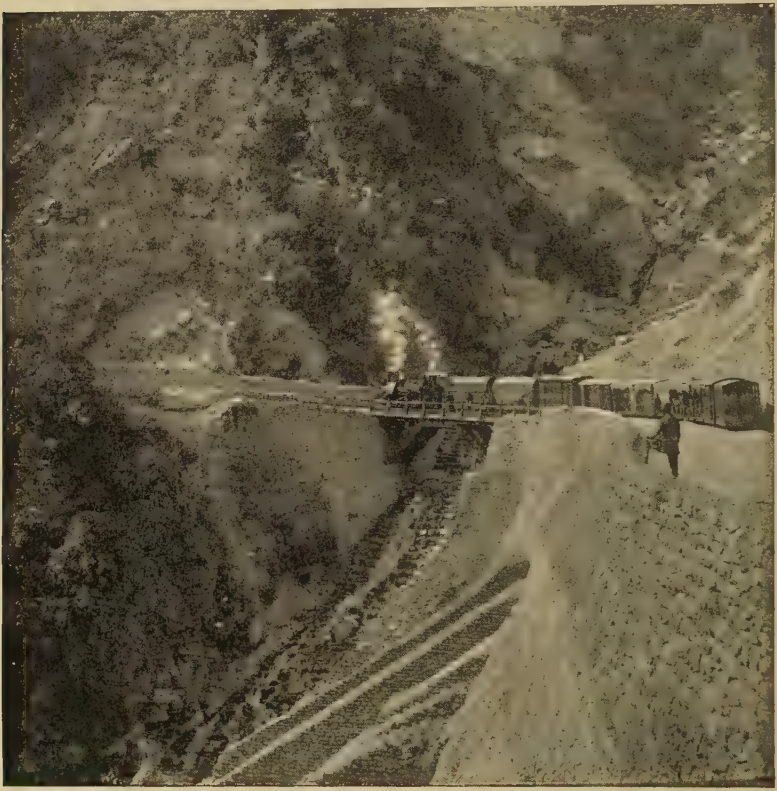
But interesting as all Indian cities are historically and religiously, there came to us a time when we were glad to say farewell to their tumultuous life and picturesque pageant of idolatry; for we were eager to behold something as far removed from all such scenes as heaven is high above the earth. In fact, to go from the polluted Ganges at Benares up to its crystal source in the Himalayan glaciers is to turn from pestilence to purity, from degradation to sublimity, from man to God.

The Himalayas, as all know, are the loftiest range of mountains on our globe, their name being derived from the two Sanskrit words, *hima*, snow, and *alaya*, a house. Hence the appropriate translation of their title is "The Halls of Snow." On one of their foot-hills, three hundred and fifty miles from Calcutta, and more than seven thousand feet above the sea, is a grand point of observation, called Darjeeling, which signifies "Up in the clouds." This is a pretty little mountain sanitarium, with many charming villas and a good hotel. It is never entirely "out of season," for travelers come to it in winter, as residents of Calcutta do in summer—the former to enjoy the wonderful view of the Himalayas, the latter to escape the fearful heat upon the Indian plains; for here the temperature never rises above 78°, and sometimes falls as low as 30°. The proximity to Thibet,



BUDDHIST PRIESTS WITH PRAYER-BELLS.

which in an air-line is only one hundred and fifty miles away, is shown by the Mongolian types of faces seen in the streets and market-place. We noticed several Buddhist lamas from Thibet, turning a kind of hand-bell, within which is a roll of printed prayers. The revolution of the machine reels off the prayers, without interfering in the least with the holder's thoughts. Even this is deemed too laborious by some Buddhists, and enormous cylinders, containing prayers enough for a whole community, have been ingeniously constructed, so as to revolve by means of water-wheels or windmills. One of these automatic prayer-barrels may be seen



GOING TO DARJEELING.

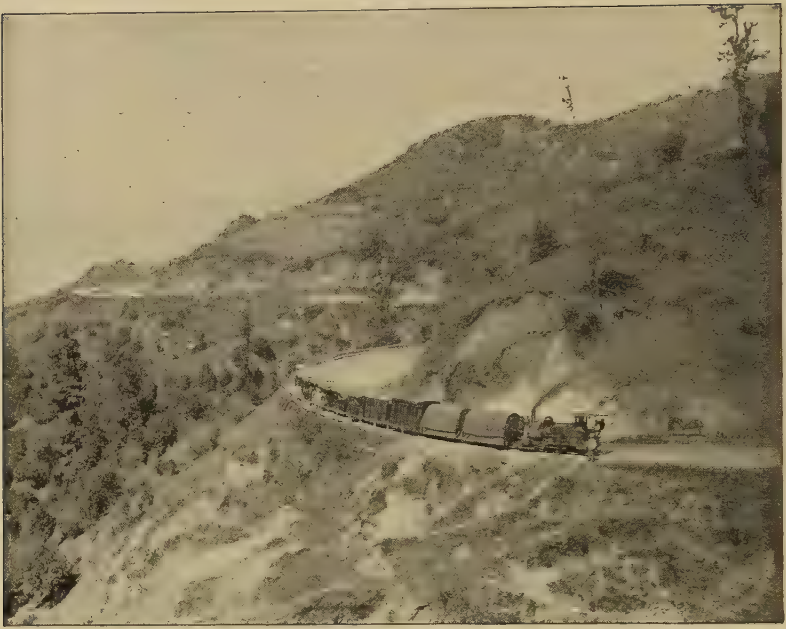
A PEAK OF THE HIMALAYAS.

at Darjeeling, and a bell marks each revolution, as it turns upon its axis.

The means of reaching Darjeeling is a tiny railroad, so small as to be almost ludicrous. It is, in fact, but two feet wide. Yet, narrow though it be, its length is more than fifty miles and it winds up the mountain side in such a multitude of twists and turns that the engineer in the locomotive can sometimes hold a conversation with passengers in the rear car, as across a narrow street. In one place, it describes the figure eight within a length of about five hundred feet; and several times, where loops are quite impossible, the engine has to draw the train up one incline and then push it backward up another, thus working up the cliff in zigzags.

THE LOOP.

The railway carriages in which one makes this trip are as extraordinary as the road itself. They are only nine feet



ROUNDING A CURVE.

long and six feet high, and come to within nine inches of the ground. Seated in one of these small boxes, while wriggling up the mountain side and shaken violently every other minute on the innumerable curves, I felt as I should suppose an insect might feel riding on one of the rings of a rattlesnake's tail.

To pull us up this steep ascent, our baby locomotive, weighing only nine-and-a-half tons, toiled constantly for seven hours; now straining every nerve in short, quick, agonizing puffs, now halting as if breathless and exhausted; but finally, conquering every obstacle, and glistening with oil, as if drenched with perspiration, it turned triumphantly the last and loftiest of countless corners, and reached the terminus—Darjeeling. This is the spur of a mountain, which juts out into space, as the promontory of Monaco projects into the Mediterranean. One walks around it on a level path, as on the parapet of an enormous citadel. On three sides, the bluff falls sharply off, much as it does around the city of Jerusalem; save that in this case the descent is more precipitous, and the surrounding chasms are two thousand feet in depth.

THE WITCH OF DARJEELING.

Beyond the deep ravines, however, is a range of mountains, nine, ten, and eleven thousand feet in height, rolling away like monstrous billows, which increase in size until the wall of the huge amphitheatre is complete. It was shortly before sunrise on the morning of the seventeenth of December, that I stood here waiting for the couriers of the dawn to rouse from dreams the sleeping Orient. For me the moment was as full of promise as when I stood upon the North Cape, far above the Arctic Ocean, and gazed out over the rounded shoulder of the globe, to see the Midnight Sun.

At length, a hidden hand seemed to draw back the misty

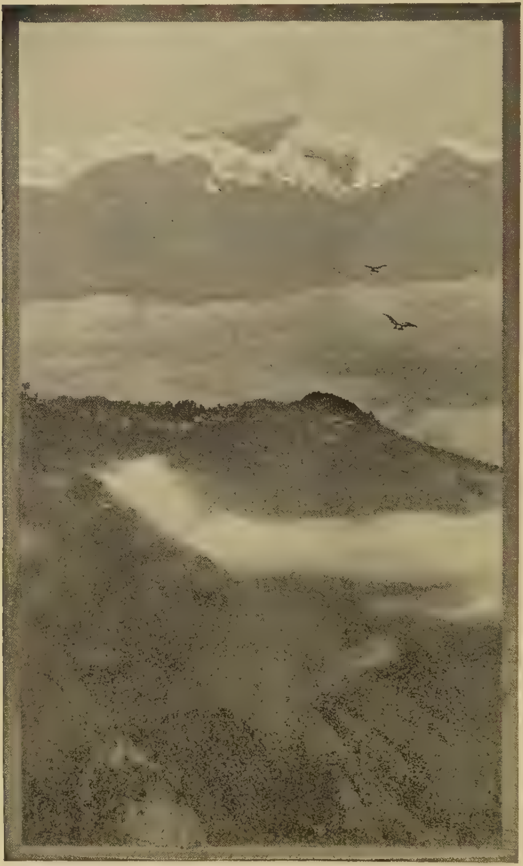
curtain of the night, permitting me to see what was beyond the highest circle of the amphitheatre. Merciful God! was this a revelation of the gates of pearl, the gleaming battlements of the celestial city? Assuredly it seemed so; for toward the north, dwarfing all lesser peaks into insignificance, rose a stupendous barrier against the sky, as if to indicate the limits of the world. Though forty miles away, we nevertheless had to gaze upward to behold it. At first this wall seemed ghostlike, indefinable, and mysterious; but as I watched, its crystal edge was gradually changed from white to gold. A moment more, and as a blush overspreads a snow-white cheek, neck, and breast, so did that roseate hue move swiftly downward to the right and left, until the mighty form of Kinchinjinga, twenty-nine thousand feet in height, stood absolutely rosy in the morning glow. Then peak after peak, in the majestic order of their heights, repeated this magnificent greeting to the god of day. For more than a hundred miles, a line of walls,

BUDDHIST PRIEST AND PRIESTESS FROM THIBET.

towers, and buttresses—yes, every form of architecture that the mind can possibly conceive — stood out in gold and silver on a sky of sapphire; while lower still, and leading upward to the Halls of Snow, a host of glaciers rose like jeweled highways of the gods. The highest of these peaks is Kinchinjinga, for many years supposed to be the loftiest mountain on our globe. It is now known to be surpassed by one more distant summit — Mount Everest, which rears its icy crest eight hundred and forty-six feet higher than its rival. This is, however, difficult to see, and practically impossible to illustrate, being one hundred and twenty miles away. But Kinchinjinga is the glory of Darjeeling, the representative of the Himalayas, the viceroy of Mount Everest, the chosen form in which these mountains

A STUPENDOUS BARRIER.

show themselves to man. No life exists upon these awful heights. No human voice disturbs their solemn stillness. No foot of man has ever pressed these pure and radiant summits. The highest pass by which men go at times from India to Thibet is only eighteen thousand feet in height, leaving two miles of ice and snow still towering toward the sun and stars. Forever virgin to the touch of man, these highest points of our revolving globe remain as chaste and unapproachable as the moon, nearer than and yet as inaccessible as the North Pole.



A CELESTIAL VISION.

That evening, about six o'clock, I stood again on the promontory of Darjeeling. Enormous clouds (themselves as large as mountains changed to mist) were drifting through the amphitheatre. But far above the lesser mountains which they half concealed, we could gaze upward into the empyrean itself,—calm, cloudless, and eternal. There in ineffable glory rose the vast chain of the Himalayas, illumined by the setting sun. This in itself was wonderful. But, gradually, as the shades of coming night crept upward from the valleys, these wondrous peaks appeared detached from earth, — belonging to another world, — holding communication with another sphere. We gazed on them with bated breath. Silence was golden; speech would have been sacrilege. For more than an hour did this celestial vision linger, so high did these transcendent summits rise toward heaven, and so far-reaching were their glances toward the radiant west. Even when Darjeeling and its ramparts were completely lost in darkness, the benediction of departing day still rested lovingly upon that loftiest crest — a cloud of roseate fire in the dome of Night — until the ultimate farewell was given,— the veil was drawn,—and I awoke as from a dream.

INDIA

II

SNAKE-CHARMERS.

INDIA

LECTURE II

INDIA is in some respects the most difficult country in the world to understand. One thinks of it at times as one great nation, governed, it is true, by England, but still constituting one homogeneous people. Nothing is further from the truth. It is a vast conglomeration of principalities and races, in some instances as different from each other as is France from Germany. The natives do not even speak a common tongue. There are in India no less than two hundred distinct dialects, each unintelligible to speakers of any of the others; while, as if this were not enough, the people of the same community are subdivided into castes which will not even eat with one another. And how appalling is their number — three hundred millions,— nearly one-fifth of the entire race, and

A MOHAMMEDAN.

double the population of the Roman Empire when its extent was greatest! The amount of territory occupied by these millions is enormous. The province of Lower Bengal is as large as France; that of Madras exceeds Great Britain and Ireland; that of Bombay equals Germany in area; and the size of the Punjab rivals that of Italy.

To comprehend the heterogeneous mass inhabiting India appears at first as difficult as to explore an Indian jungle; but there is one trusty clue to guide us through the labyrinth,—Religion. This will explain to us the customs of that land as nothing else can; for all these millions are so superstitious and fanatical that feelings of incredible intensity control their conduct from the cradle to the grave. After Hinduism, the second great religion which prevails in India is Mohammedanism. Nineteen out of every twenty people in India are either Hindus or Mohammedans. Victoria, Empress of India, has more Moslem subjects than the Sultan himself. There are no less than fifty-seven millions of them, or more than the entire Japanese nation. Their wealth and power, it is true, have

THE HUGLI RIVER.

largely disappeared; but in the places where the Moslem crescent reached the zenith of its glory their splendid architectural remains rival in elegance and grace the finest forms of Gothic or of Grecian art, and in themselves repay a journey around the world.

The gateway to India on its eastern coast is Calcutta, the rival of Bombay. As we approached it, the multitude of ships and steamers on the river Hugli exceeded anything that I had ever seen. For several miles we sailed past vessels of the largest size, frequently anchored five abreast. I was informed that one of these ships had just brought from England a hundred and twenty tons of gin and forty tons of Bibles. If this proportion is maintained on all of them, we may discover why the advent here of Christian nations is not regarded by the natives as an unmixed blessing. It is, however, probable that the gin is chiefly intended for the Europeans, while the poor heathen have to take the Bibles.

Unlike most Indian cities, Calcutta offers very little of historic interest. Two hundred years ago it was a cluster of mud huts. To-day, by reason of some handsome structures, such as its Post-office, it is proudly called the "City of Pal-

A NATIVE PALACE.

aces." Unfortunately, however, hovels are still so numerous that I believe no other town in India reveals in such immediate contrast the two extremes of British wealth and native degradation. In what may be called Anglicized Calcutta are broad streets lined with statues and imposing buildings. The latter, being constructed of brick covered with painted stucco, are as a rule inferior to the public edifices of Bombay which are built of stone; nevertheless their size often renders them quite palatial in appearance.

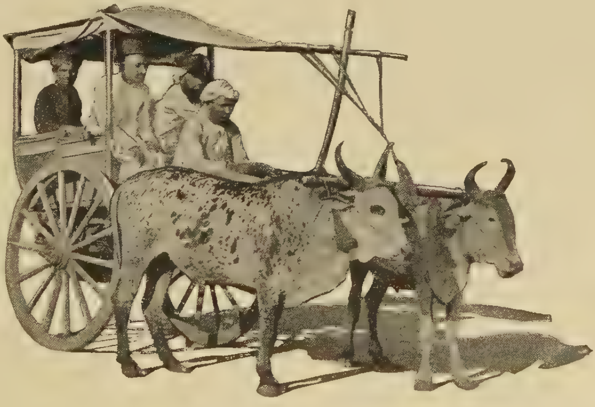
ON THE MAIDAN.

The favorite promenade of Calcutta, known as Maidan, extends for more than two miles on the river-bank, and is as level as a parlor floor. Broad carriage-roads wind over it between expanses of soft turf and through a multitude of tropical plants. During the day its famous

ANGLICIZED CALCUTTA.

driveways are almost deserted. For while the sun retains it in his fiery grasp all Europeans shun it like a heated oven. Occasional statues of distinguished Englishmen then seem to be its only occupants. But when the solar shafts fall on this promenade obliquely, and pierce with difficulty, if at all, the drooping fringes of the palms, the British colony appears as if by magic, invading the vast area from all directions, much as the chorus of an opera troupe pours in upon an empty stage. Between five and seven o'clock the spectacle here displayed is rarely, if ever, equaled in the world. While military music stirs the balmy air, one sees along these avenues the most astonishing varieties of costumes and complexions. Even the simplest carriage of an English family will have its native coachman robed in white from head to foot and a dark groom resplendent in huge colored

A CALCUTTA STREET.



A CALCUTTA "HERDIC."

turban and gold-embroidered jacket; and these, with Indian princes, wealthy Parsees, and rich Hindus, give to the scene a touch of Oriental splendor.

But, while the English in India are prudent enough to avoid the parks in the middle of the day, they have decided, absurdly enough, that the fashionable time for making calls shall be from twelve to two. One wretched victim of this social tyranny recently defined these Indian morning-calls as

> "The destruction that wasteth at noonday."

We could not wonder that the English who reside in India look on Calcutta in the winter as an Eastern Paradise. It is, indeed, the centre of the Government, and here the Governor-general of India holds a court, said to surpass in brilliancy that of most European sovereigns. At Christmas time, especially, the town is thronged with officers of the army and navy and all the notable men in England's Indian service.

DRESSED FOR WORK.

Then, also, hundreds of visitors from Europe, America, and Australia constitute a most distinguished and enjoyable society. But this is only one side of Calcutta. The native side is very different. The former is, of course, more agreeable to the English, and is the one more frequently described by travelers. But we all know what Europeans are like. The question is, what do the natives resemble? For, in India, where the foreigners number about one hundred thousand, the natives reach a population of three hundred millions. They are very easily studied at Calcutta, for at almost any point a short walk brings one from public buildings and spacious thoroughfares to the disgusting filth and poverty of the common Hindus. Most of the native streets are dirty alleys; most of their dwellings, hovels made of sun-dried mud or of bamboo poles covered with coarse matting. The occupants, in many instances, have their well-nigh naked bodies greased with rancid butter (which they consume internally as well), and even their hair is smeared with the same mixture. The pungent odor of this lubricant, combined with the smoke of burned manure, which is the fuel of India, gave to the atmosphere a peculiar quality which I shall always associate with Hindustan.

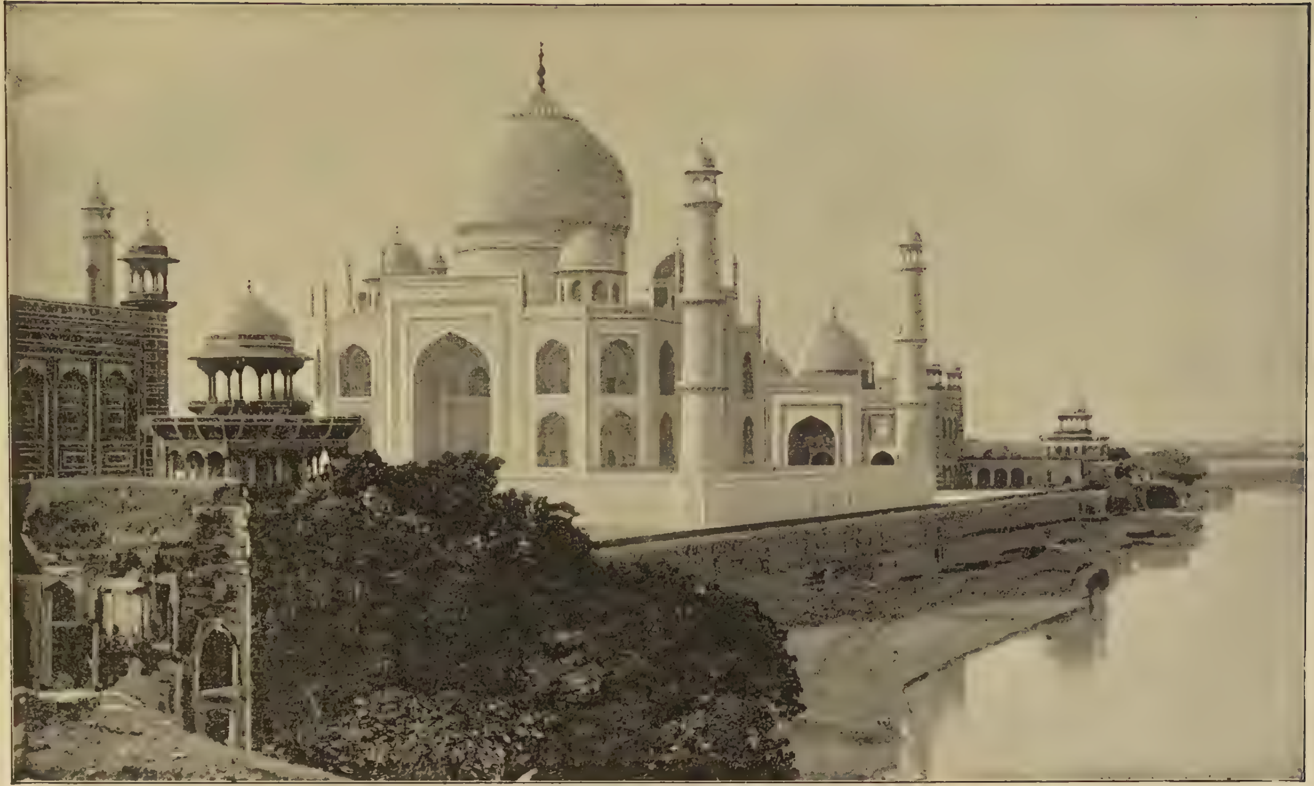
Some of the natives—tailors and cobblers—we found hard at work, seated in holes in a plastered wall, like dogs in their kennels. Even the splendor of the Mogul palaces which we afterward beheld could not make me forget this misery and degradation. India is a land of terrible extremes. Whatever is good there is superlatively good, and what is bad can hardly be imagined worse. Thus, in the matter of hotels, the very best in Calcutta is the Great Eastern; but it is my deliberate conviction, based upon an experience of many never-to-be-forgotten

THE NATIVE QUARTER.

days and nights, that, whereas, all the hotels in India are bad, those of Calcutta are worse than those of any city of its size and prominence in any country of the civilized world. It is true, the Great Eastern is well situated, and covers a great area; but in this case, "O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!"

My traveling companion and myself, having telegraphed in advance, were assigned to a room on the best floor of the hotel. We reached it by a long, dark corridor about four feet wide. This space was made still smaller by a line of Hindu servants who were lying on the floor — one in front of each door. Through these we picked our way to room number "54." I give the number, not that the reader may specially avoid it when he goes there (since most of the other rooms are equally bad), but that, on seeing it, he may remember me and murmur: "There was a man who told the truth." The walls of this room did not come within two feet of the ceiling, and, as most of the other apartments were equally well ventilated, we assisted by day at half a dozen family quarrels, and at night could hear the whole brigade of Hindus snoring in the corridor. The Oriental way of calling servants is by clapping the hands. This is occasionally inconvenient; for in a room next to mine was a refractory

LIKE DOGS IN THEIR KENNELS.



THE TAJ MAHAL FROM THE RIVER.

child, and every time his mother spanked him all the servants in the entry responded to the call.

Number "54" was a whitewashed cell with very primitive furniture, and with the filthiest piece of straw matting that I ever saw, until, on a subsequent visit to Calcutta, I had room number "77," in which was a still worse specimen. I picked my way about on both of them, much as a lady crosses a muddy street.

Summoning our Indian servant, we asked him to unpack the sheets, wadded quilts, pillow-cases, and towels which every traveler who respects himself will carry with him through the Indian Empire; but, on turning to inspect my bed, I found that two black crows were perched upon it, like Poe's raven on the "bust of Pallas, just above my chamber door." Apparently, too, they were determined to leave it "nevermore;" for they were as tenacious of their temporary home as Irish peasants resisting an eviction. When they had finally flown away through an open window, I requested that the solitary piece of linen which adorned the couch be removed. Presently, hearing a cooing noise, I looked up toward the ceiling and saw a nest of pigeons in a hole in the wall. Dirt and straw had fallen from this upon my coat

THE GREAT EASTERN HOTEL.

hanging on a chair beneath; and an indifferent servant, summoned in hot haste, at length deliberately climbed a ladder, removed the nest, and stuffed the hole with a newspaper! Such was my room in the best hotel in the capital of England's Indian Empire.

NATIVE LIFE.

On entering the dining-room of the Great Eastern, we found that behind the chair of each guest stood his private servant or "boy." The sight of these bare-footed, white-robed Hindus running about in quest of food, suggested to me a panic-stricken crowd of colored people rushing from their beds at night. When coffee was served at dinner, we could at first obtain no sugar with it, for sugar is not served in bowls upon the table, lest the famished natives empty it into their pockets. A little of it is brought in a wine-glass to each guest, who is also allowed but one spoon. As each servant is responsible for his master's spoon, I saw my attendant, between each course, wipe mine on a napkin when he thought he was observed — otherwise, on his clothing! Even then, there were not spoons enough to go around, and we amused ourselves by watching three or four Hindus struggle for one, and we made bets as to which would carry off the prize.

"NO. 54."

THE POST-OFFICE, CALCUTTA.

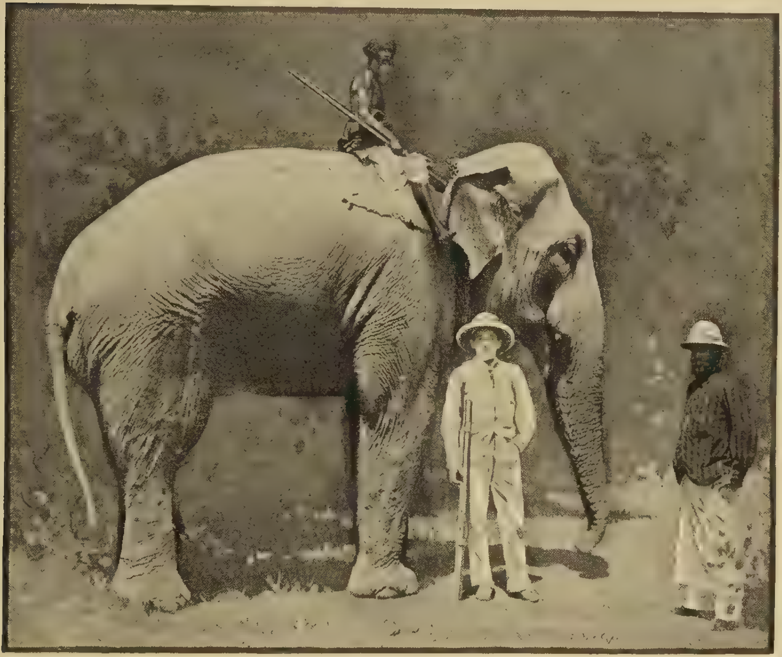
Where the imposing Post-office of Calcutta now stands took place, in 1756, the tragedy of the "Black Hole of Calcutta." The prison itself, known as the

A MOUNTAIN SANITARIUM, NORTH OF CALCUTTA.

"Black Hole," together with the fort of which it formed a part, has long since disappeared; but throughout the English-speaking world, its name is still suggestive of atrocious cruelty. When the fortress of Calcutta was captured from the English by the Indian prince, Suraj-al-Dowlah, and a horde of natives, the survivors of the garrison, numbering one hundred and forty-six men, were locked up for the night in a room only eighteen feet square and containing but one small window. It was the month of June, when in Calcutta the heat is, under the most favorable circumstances, almost unendurable for Europeans. In vain the suffer-

RELIGIOUS ABLUTION.

ers, who were crowded so closely together that they could scarcely move, implored their jailers to release them, promising them any amount of money in return for liberty. The natives, jeering at their anguish, remained obdurate, and when the dawn revealed the terrible result of those long hours of maddening heat, intolerable thirst, and slow asphyxiation, one hundred and twenty-three were dead, and twenty-three pale, haggard men stood raving with delirium or faintly gasping at the window, standing, as on a mound, upon the corpses of their comrades.



THE KING OF BEASTS IN INDIA.

One of our first walks in Calcutta was to the river Hugli, in whose waters a multitude of Hindus were bathing, much as we had seen them at Benares. Here, as there, bathing is a religious duty, and prayers are uttered after each

A RETIRED THUG.

ablution. On the bank were many individuals who had been brought here to die; for this river, being one of the mouths of the Ganges, is sacred, and to expire here insures one's entrance into heaven. I was astonished and saddened to find that many of the disgusting features of Hindu idolatry and superstition are as prevalent in Calcutta as in the cities of the interior. We visited, for example, close by the river, a Hindu temple, known as Kalighat, and there beheld more loathsome sights than any which we had witnessed at Benares. The Goddess Kali, who is worshiped here by hundreds of thousands of people yearly, is represented by a hideous idol, with human skulls around her neck and with a mouth apparently reeking with clots of blood. A draught of warm human blood is believed to make her happy for a thousand years. Here in a courtyard, slippery with gore, we saw a sacrifice of kids and goats which are slain every day to appease the

KALIGHAT.

deity. The victims' heads lay about the altar like croquet balls round a finishing stake, and priests, degraded in appearance, offered for a fee to make more sacrifices merely as a spectacle. It should be remembered that this is not an obscure and unimportant temple of Calcutta: on the contrary, it is the most popular Hindu shrine in the city, and the very name Calcutta is derived from Kalighat.

A GROUP OF HINDUS.

Moreover, the goddess Kali was the special patroness of the Thugs, the professional stranglers of India, who for many years committed murders here in the name of religion. These fanatical assassins used to roam about the country in bands of from ten to two hundred. Each man had a special duty to perform; one was the leader; others were scouts; some were pick-bearers; others were grave-diggers. Disguised as pilgrims or merchants, they would associate themselves with their intended victims in the most friendly style until a favorable opportunity presented itself. Then they would suddenly seize and strangle the doomed men, and hide their bodies in graves dug with pickaxes which had been previously blessed by the priests, and were symbolical of the teeth of Kali. Two-thirds of the booty thus obtained was divided among the murderers, and the remainder given to the goddess. Even now, although the British Government has suppressed the Thugs, the Temple of Kali is as popular as ever, and hundreds of thousands still worship at her shrine.

Within the precincts of this temple we beheld several specimens of Indian fakirs, each of whom seemed a combination of beggar, fanatic, impostor, and political spy. In a disgusting area, resembling a garbage heap, a score of these men were seated, entirely naked, upon a mound of ashes, in which they rolled repeatedly. Not content with the results thus gained, they even rubbed the dirt all over their bodies, which had been previously greased in order to retain it. Their hair, matted with filth, reached nearly to their waists, and was painted yellow, and on this they threw occasional handfuls of dust and ashes. Yet when a few of them followed us into the street asking for money, they seemed to attract no attention, although they ran along beside our horse-car, in which were several European women and children. A sickening feeling, similar to that which I had felt in Canton, came over me at the sight of this human degradation; especially when I remembered that there are in India more than a million of

A FAKIR.

INDIA'S CORAL STRAND.

these half-crazed mendicants and frauds, who are revered and almost worshiped by multitudes of men and women, who will actually stoop and kiss their feet.

It is no wonder, therefore, that after such experiences, forgetful for a moment of the agreeable features of India, the following lines were, in an hour of reaction, inscribed in the author's diary:

THE GREAT BANYAN TREE.

A WAIL FROM INDIA'S CORAL STRAND.

I 'm weary of the loin-cloth,
  And tired of naked skins;
I 'm sick of filthy, knavish priests
  Who trade in human sins:
These millions of the great unwashed
  Offend both eye and nose;
I long for legs in pantaloons
  And feet concealed in hose.

A wail of human misery
  Is ringing in my ears;
The sight of utter wretchedness
  Has filled my eyes with tears;
The myriad huts of mud and straw
  Where millions toil and die
Are blots upon this fertile land
  Beneath an Orient sky.

I 'm weary of the nasal rings
  And juice-discolored lips;
I cannot bear these brown-skinned brats
  Astride their mothers' hips;
I loathe the spindling Hindu shanks
  With dirt encrusted hard;
I 'm nauseated by the hair
  That reeks of rancid lard.

I 'll ride no more in little cabs
  That serve as railroad-cars,
Each barely twenty feet in length
  And swayed by countless jars;
My bones are racked by traveling
  In India's jerky way:
Far better weeks in Pullman cars
  Than one night in Cathay!

I 'm sick at heart (and stomach too)
  Of India's vile hotels,
Whose rooms are drearier and less clean
  Than many prison cells;
Where servants swarm like cockroaches
  Yet nothing can be had,
And where your private "boy" alone
  Prevents your going mad.

I 'm weary of the sun-hats too
  Like toad-stools made of pith;
I 'm sick of Buddha's "sacred tooth"
  And every other myth.
Good-bye to whining mendicants
  Who show their loathsome sores!—
I 'm glad to take the steamer now,
  And sail for other shores.

It was with great relief that we left Kalighat and its horrors, and made our way to the Botanical Garden, in the suburbs of Calcutta, to view its celebrated banyan tree, the largest in the world. Who can forget this marvelous phenomenon, which furnished one of the illustrations in our school-books twenty-five years ago? It looked larger than I expected; though I should have remembered that it is steadily increasing, year by year, for its vitality seems to rival that of the earth itself. The circumference of its outer tendrils now sweeps through a circuit of one thousand feet!

A YOUNG BANYAN.

Not without awe did we approach and stand beneath its mighty roof. Though the main trunk is fifty feet in circumference, it was not that which most astonished me. What filled me with amazement was its horizontal branches, stretching out on every side for more than one hundred and fifty feet. These drop to the ground hundreds of tiny filaments, which, taking root, become themselves subordinate trees, send up nourishment to the parent stock, hold up its sturdy limbs, and allow them to advance till they can let fall other grappling-irons to the earth and put forth new leaves to the sun. We walked beneath this banyan tree as in a grove, and, sitting within its shade on benches placed for weary travelers, admired this marvelous growth, which, nevertheless, seems here so natural and easy that we involuntarily asked ourselves why other trees do not adopt this

GOING TO CREMATION.

system of indefinite expansion,—this secret of arboreal immortality.

As we were returning from the Botanical Garden, we met two natives carrying, in a kind of sling suspended from a pole, the body of a man.

"Where are they taking him?" I asked.

"To the river Hugli," was the reply.

"Is he dead?"

"Not yet; but he will die soon, and they are anxious that he may expire beside the sacred stream."

"What will become of his body then?"

"It will be cremated at the Burning Ghat."

"Let us go thither!" I exclaimed.

On reaching it, we were introduced to its Hindu superintendent, who is appointed by the English Government to examine all bodies brought there, to ascertain the cause of death and to inform the police if he has reason to suspect a murder. Cremation is one of the characteristic features, not only of Calcutta, but of the whole of India, and in such an over-populated and unhealthy land it is almost a necessity. What I object to, therefore, is not the act itself, but the coarse, brutal way in which it is usually performed.

UNDER THE BANYAN TREE.

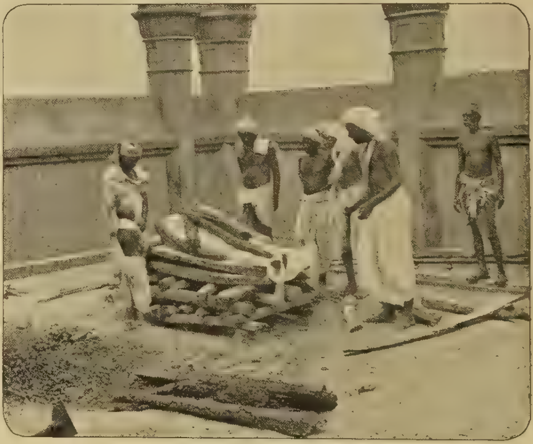
The enclosure of the Burning Ghat is an ill-kept, dirty area, bounded on one side by a grimy portico. In this we stood to watch the ceremonies. At one end was a kind of cattle-pen, where mourners wait until a vacant space for burning can be given them. I think I can say without much exaggeration that any respectable dog would, after taking one look at that waiting-room, have walked out immediately.

IN THE BURNING GHAT.

Three coolies, whose oily skin glistened in the sun, at length brought in a body on a bamboo litter. This they let fall upon the ground with the same care that an American "baggage-smasher" shows in handling a trunk. By walking ten feet farther, they could, at least, have laid it in the shade: instead of that they left it in the broiling sun. The superintendent asked some questions, and then informed us that the corpse was that of a man who had died half an hour before of rheumatism.

We did not have to wait long for the cremation. Without delay the coolies brought in ten or a dozen logs of wood about four feet in length, and threw them down close to the body. So roughly was this done that some of the sticks bounded six inches from the ground, and I fully expected to see them strike the corpse. Wood is the most expensive factor in this system of cremation. A funeral with the amount of kindling here described costs a dollar; children half-price. Yet even this is not the cheapest method. Sometimes less wood is used. In such cases the body is not entirely consumed, and the remnants must be buried. Formerly they were thrown into the river among the bathers, but this is now prohibited. The funeral-pyre, when constructed, formed a pile of logs, arranged in cross-tiers. On this the body was laid, its only covering being a bit of cotton. I could see plainly that the limbs were not yet rigid, nor had the eyes been closed. To make up for the shortness of the pyre the legs were bent back at the knees. Another layer of sticks was then placed upon the body to keep it in position. All was now ready for the burning. It is the Hindu custom for the nearest male relative to light the fire, and in this instance a son of the deceased, about sixteen years of age, took up some wisps of straw, and aided by his little brother six years old, walked around the pile of wood, lighting the kindling on every side. This was not done, however, with solemnity or the least emotion. The other relatives looked on as listlessly as if they were

WAITING FOR WOOD.



READY TO LIGHT THE PYRE.

ENGLAND AND INDIA.

assisting at a bonfire, and called out to the son to light it better here or there. A priest was meanwhile mumbling over something like a prayer, but no one paid him the least attention, and two of the body-bearers laughed and talked so boisterously as to drown his voice. "Are the bodies of wealthy Hindus burned in this filthy area?" I inquired.

"Yes," was the reply: "but their pyres usually contain more or less sandal-wood and spices, and large fees are then demanded by the assistants."

I have dwelt thus on the Hindu system of cremation, not only because it made upon me a profound impression, but also from the fact that it is typical of what is going on all over India. Thousands are burned somewhere in these densely populated provinces every day, and nothing is more strikingly illustrative of Hindu customs. But, as performed here, cremation lacks all delicacy and solemnity, and the last crematory act that I beheld was as revolting as the first.

ARRANGING THE BODY.

One of the most remarkable and interesting cities of India

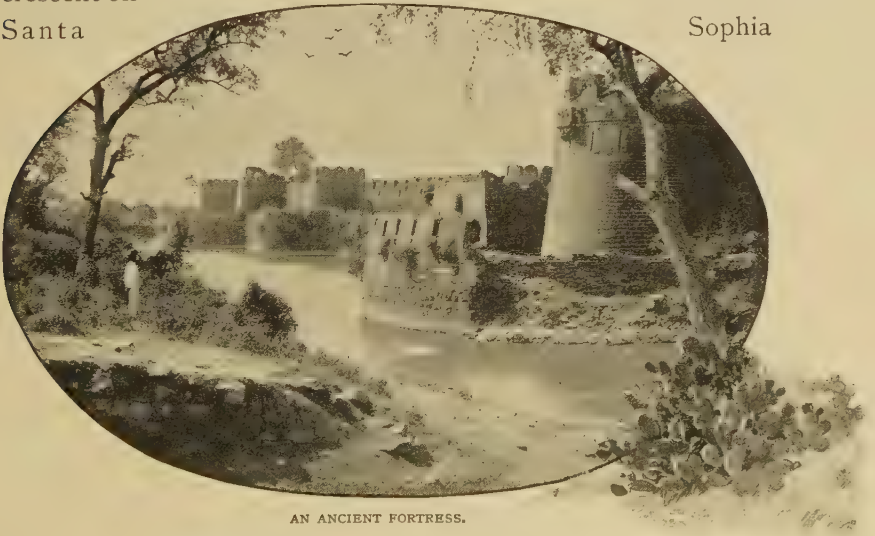
DELHI.

is Delhi. In point of age it challenges comparison with Benares. It antedates by many centuries the Rome of Romulus. It is poetically called the "Rome of Asia." It has been seven times ruined and rebuilt. The desolate plain surrounding it resembles the Campagna. Throughout an area of twenty-four square miles are strewn the fragments of the city's former grandeur. Much of its past is too indefinite to appeal to us; but there is one magnificent epoch in its history, only three hundred years ago, which gives to it a fascination rarely equaled even in the Orient. For Delhi was the capital of India's Mohammedan conquerors,—the favorite home

A RUIN NEAR DELHI.

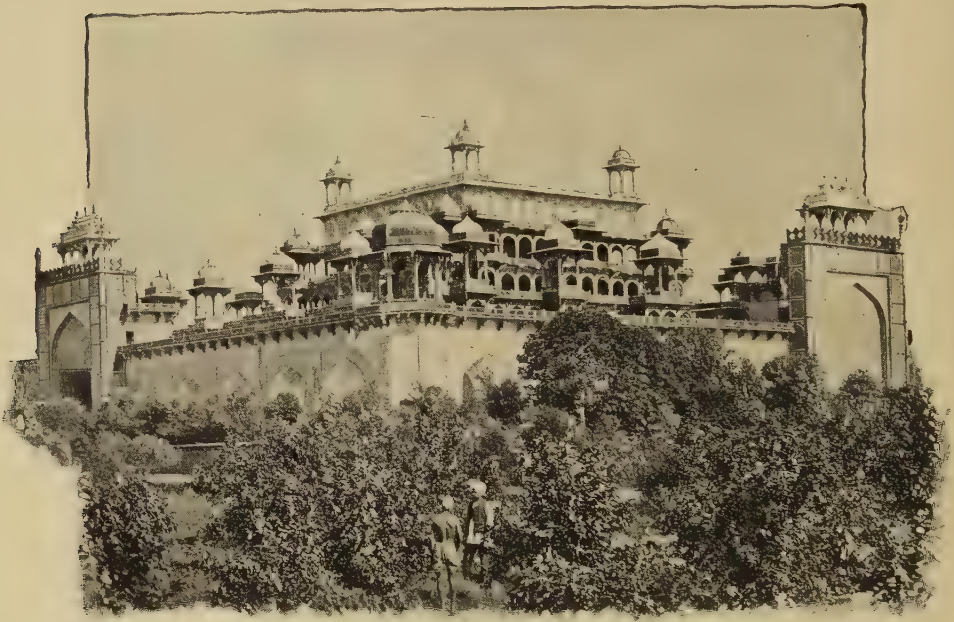
of those incomparably rich and lavish sovereigns, the Great Moguls.

Perhaps the reader may here knit his brow and say below his breath, "Who were the Great Moguls?" For, owing to the busy lives that we have led since leaving school and college, we possibly remember of them now only what Thomas Moore told us in his poem "Lalla Rookh." Few things are easier to remember, however, than an outline of the Mogul Empire. Only three great heroes in that dynasty need to be recalled,— Baber, the Founder; Akbar, the Ruler; and Shah Jehan, the Builder. No matter for the others. These names are like the three stars in Orion's belt. Who, save astronomers, ever care to trace the rest of that great constellation in the vault of night? Baber, who was born almost contemporaneously with the discovery of America by Columbus, invaded and conquered a large part of India in 1525. His throne was the saddle, his canopy the sky. He was a Mohammedan,—a true specimen of those followers of the Prophet who had already built the Mosque of Cordova in Spain, wrested from Christian hands the sepulchre of Jesus, and placed the crescent on the dome of Santa Sophia

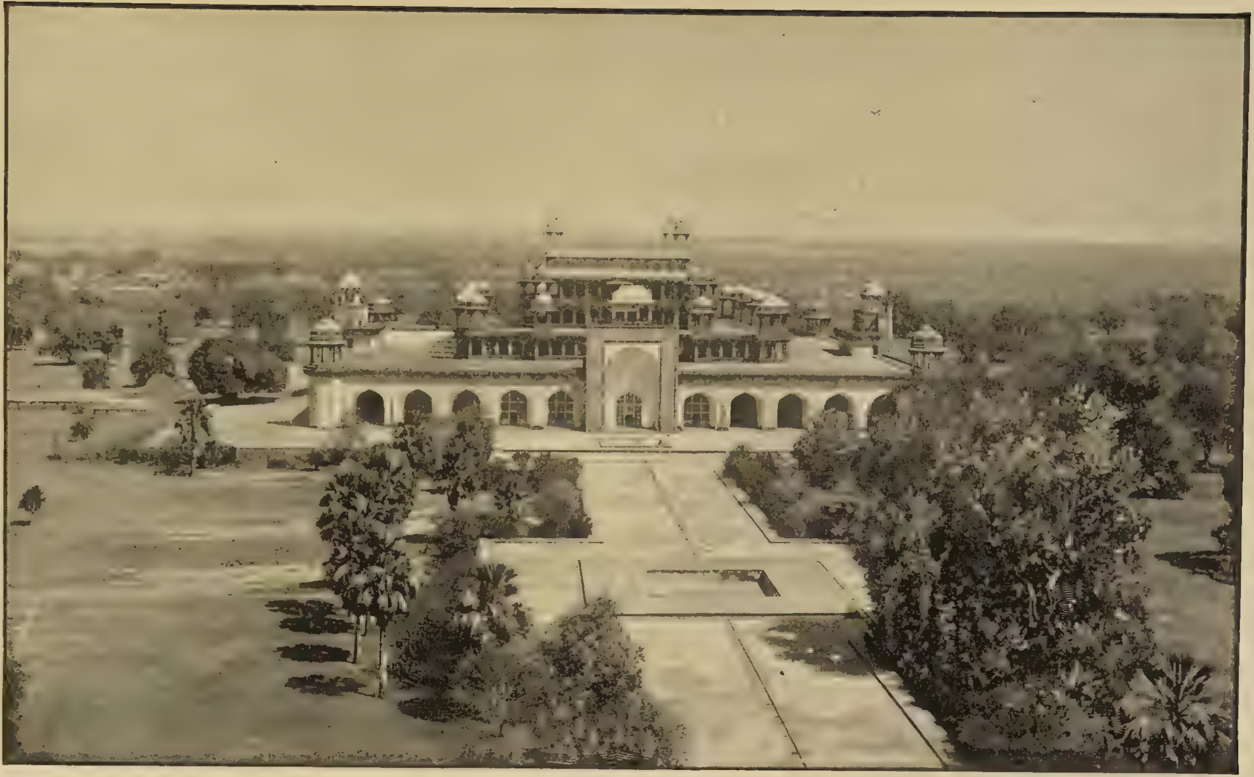


AN ANCIENT FORTRESS.

in Stamboul. He would have been remarkable in any age, for with the talents of a warrior and administrator he combined fondness for literature, music, and architecture. He even wrote his own biography in memoirs which have recently been translated into English. They are extremely interesting, for in them Baber tells without restraint the secrets of his heart. The grandson of this conqueror was Akbar, one of the most successful men that ever occupied a throne. A study of his life astonished me. His was the task not merely to extend his Indian Empire, but to unite the various nationalities of which it was composed. This he accomplished grandly, and, though he was a contemporary of Queen Elizabeth and Henry IV, the romantic story of his victories, his statesmanship, and private life, reads like the history of Julius Cæsar. He was a handsome man, famed for his physical



THE MAUSOLEUM OF AKBAR.



TOMB OF AKBAR, AGRA

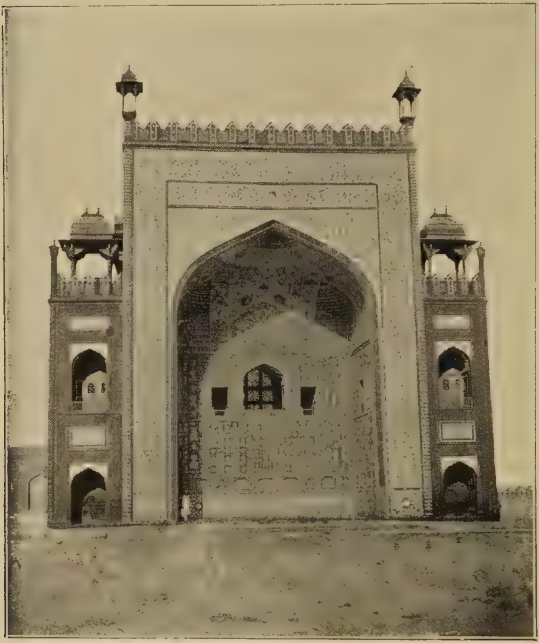
strength and captivating manners. He was affectionate and loyal to his friends, and ready to forgive his enemies; yet was a most successful warrior and a determined ruler. His breadth of mind was extraordinary. Although born and bred a Moslem, he nevertheless employed, without distinction, both Hindus and Mohammedans, and had among his friends the followers of Brahma, Buddha, Zoroaster, and Jesus. His motto was: "There is good in every creed. Let us adopt what is good and discard the remainder."

When he was dead, men realized with astonishment that during his long reign of forty-nine years India had been exempt from foreign invasions, that universal peace had been established, and that the men of every sect had lived and worshiped in security.

The tomb of Akbar, fifteen miles from Agra, is a noble edifice of richly-tinted sandstone and white marble, combining beauty, strength, and majesty. This was, in fact, the style of architecture that Akbar loved. For, in addition to all else, this emperor built the most imposing structures to be found in India. Not the most beautiful structures: that was the work of Shah Jehan, the builder of the Taj

OLD INDIAN SHRINES.

Mahal. The warlike Akbar built gigantic fortresses. His grandson reared within them the most elaborate palaces this earth has seen. One worked in granite, the other in alabaster;—the genius of the first was akin to that of Michelangelo; that of the second possessed the inspiration of a Raphael.



ONE OF THE APPROACHES TO AKBAR'S MAUSOLEUM.

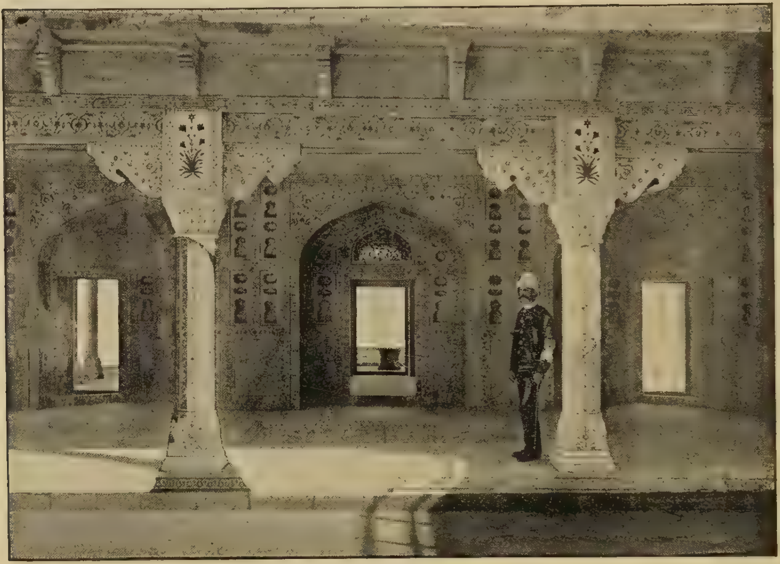
On the fifth and loftiest story of this mausoleum stands the cenotaph of Akbar, his body being as usual buried in the crypt below. This upper story is a courtyard of white marble. In the centre (its only canopy the sapphire sky) is a sarcophagus of alabaster, richly carved and bearing an appropriate epitaph. Three feet from this rises a marble pedestal, in the top of which is a slight cavity. It gave me an idea of the magnificence of those old days that I had never grasped before, to learn that here, so far above the usual sight of men, once rested that most famous jewel in the world,—the Kohinoor diamond; now in the possession of one, who, though she has never set foot in India, is, nevertheless, the present Empress of the Mogul Empire—Queen Victoria.

To appreciate the third great monarch of the Mogul

Empire, Shah Jehan, one must inspect the palace built by him at Delhi. When I first stepped within the audience-chamber of the Grand Moguls, it seemed to me that all I had read and heard of it had given me no idea of its amazing richness. It so exceeded all my expectations that the result was just the same as if I had not known that such enchanting dreams of Eastern architects had ever been materialized in stone. Here are long corridors and rooms which are not merely paved, roofed, and lined with purest marble; that marble itself is covered with sculptures in relief until each block becomes a masterpiece of art. Nor is this all, for, spreading over the pavement, twined about the columns, and sparkling on the ceilings, are variously colored vines, leaves, and flowers. "Are these walls painted, then?" one naturally inquires. Far from it. This decoration is obtained by means of precious stones, inlaid like Florentine mosaic. Yes, in this palace there are miles of garlands, wreaths, and tendrils, growing apparently in great luxuriance, yet actually composed of jasper, agate, onyx, goldstone, and carnelian, with here and there inscriptions from the Koran, all outlined in mosaic on a background as white as snow.

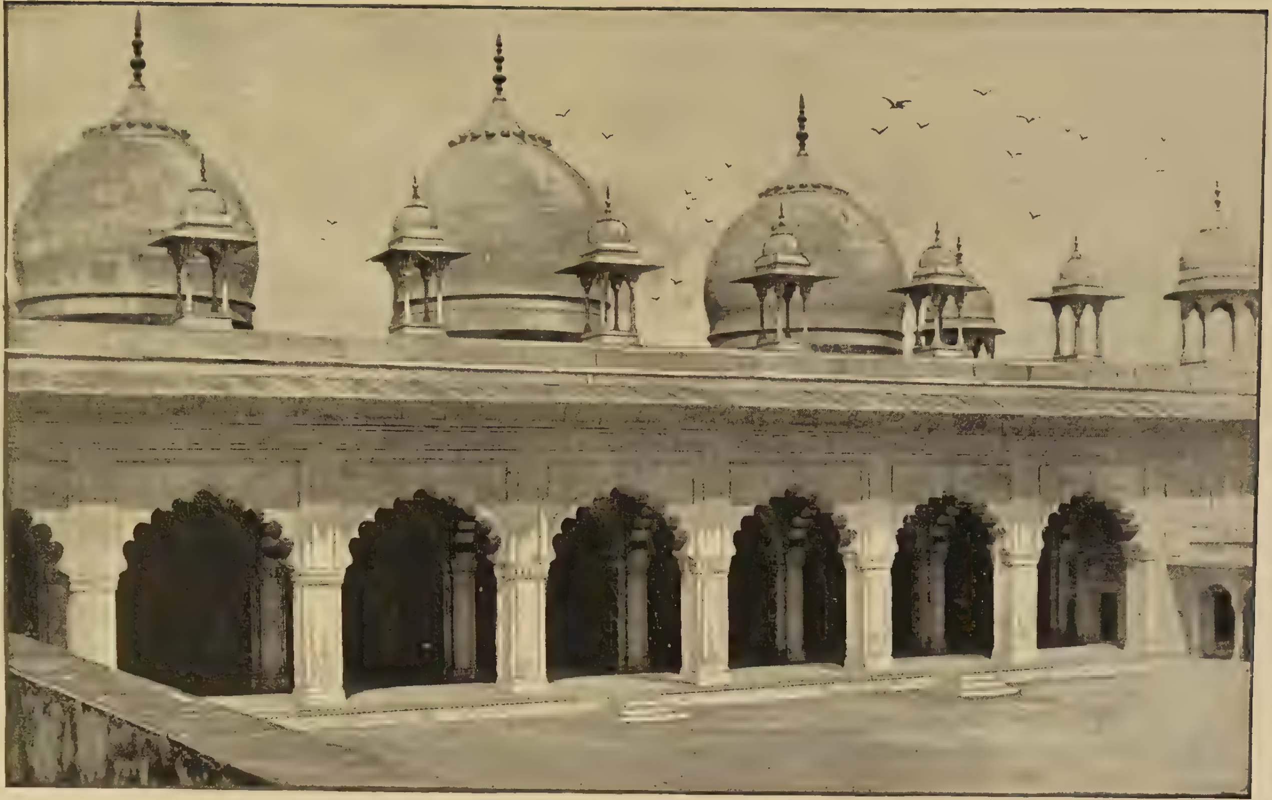
THE CENOTAPH.

Set in the walls are graceful pockets, such as we see in the courts of the Alhambra, in which the veiled and jeweled ladies of the palace kept their slippers or their gems. Here in the softened light I could have easily fancied that my outstretched hand might pluck bouquets of roses and camellias. But in reality, the trellises on which they grew were marble screens, and the green leaves and ruby petals of the flowers on these walls glowed in precious stones.

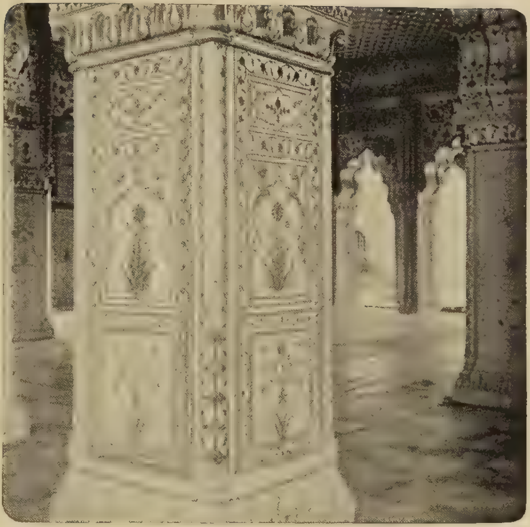


THE MOGUL PALACE AT DELHI.

No words are adequate to portray this sculptured loveliness. Hence, let me ask you to assist me. You have, perhaps a piece of Florentine mosaic which you treasure as a brooch or paper-weight. Expand that into a panel set in an alabaster wall, or into a stately column brilliant as a prism. In your home there is, perhaps, a Persian rug whose colors you admire. Transform that into a mosaic, and with it pave the floor or decorate the roof. Again, you have a bit of Chinese ivory elaborately carved. Magnify that till it forms a mile of marble balustrades. Now multiply these panels, prisms,

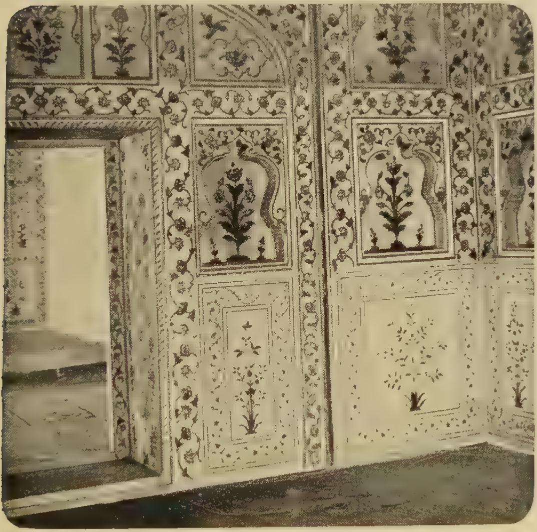


PEARL MOSQUE.



JEWELED WALLS.

rugs, and screens and having made of them a fairy palace, delicate as frost-work, insert within its walls a million glittering gems; then, as you gaze enraptured at your workmanship, murmur to yourself, "This is a little like the palace of the Grand Moguls!" Yet what once existed here was vastly richer and more elegant than what is visible to-day. We saw, for example, the corner of an alabaster pedestal,—all that is left now of the famous "Peacock Throne," on which the Mogul emperor sat in majesty. That throne was one of the marvels of the world. It was made by order of Shah Jehan, whose jewelers labored for seven years



FLOWERS IN PRECIOUS STONES.

in its decoration. Its value was no less than thirty million dollars. Its framework was of solid gold, encrusted with innumerable precious stones. Above it stretched a golden canopy fringed with pearls. The back was made to represent two jeweled peacocks with expanded tails, whose colors were reproduced by means of rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds; while, to crown all, upon the top of this imperial seat was perched a parrot carved from a single emerald.

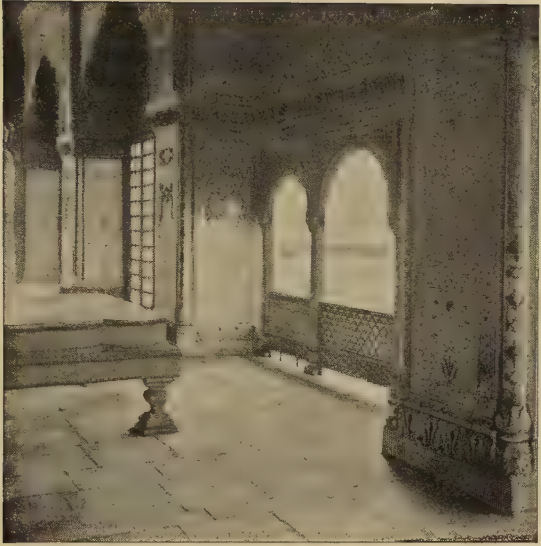
AN IVORY MANUSCRIPT-HOLDER.

We cannot wonder, therefore, that upon these walls was traced in exquisite mosaic a Persian verse whose meaning is as follows: —

> "If there be a paradise on earth, it is here."

One is, of course, reminded by this of Moore's rendition of it in his poem, "Lalla Rookh," when he causes one of the inmates of this palace to sing:—

> "Come hither, come hither — by night and by day
> We linger in pleasures that never are gone;
> Like the waves of the summer, as one dies away
> Another as sweet and as shining comes on.
> And the love that is o'er, in expiring, gives birth
> To a new one as warm, as unequall'd in bliss;
> And oh! if there be an Elysium on earth,
> It is this, it is this."



PEDESTAL OF THE PEACOCK THRONE.

But, alas! there is no Elysium on earth. This certainly was far from being one. Even its builder, Shah Jehan (dethroned by his ungrateful son), was not allowed to occupy it; and after he, the last of the illustrious three, was gone, the end was near. Sooner or later, fate invariably scatters accumulated wealth. The very richness of this Mogul capital attracted the despoiler. Tempted by such a dazzling prize, in 1738, a Shah of Persia captured Delhi and its contents, plundered this gorgeous edifice, and carried off to Teheran the Peacock Throne and more than a thousand camel-loads of gems and precious ornaments, valued, it is said, at four hundred million dollars.

Thirty years ago, after the Indian mutiny, the last of the Moguls, heir to the throne of Akbar and Shah Jehan, was tried by English officers in this

PAST AND PRESENT.

TRAVELING AS FREIGHT.

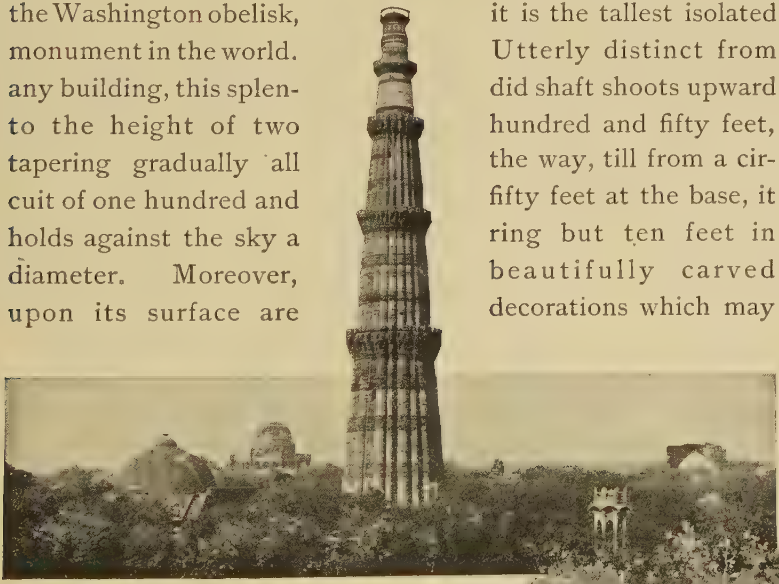
glorious palace of his ancestors for treason to Great Britain. Judgment was found against him, and, having been banished forever from India, he died a few years later in the British settlement of Burma. Ironical indeed, therefore, seems the inscription on these glittering walls. The Mogul dynasty is gone forever, and in these voiceless corridors of vanished Oriental splendor our echoing footsteps seemed to murmur sadly, "*Sic transit gloria mundi.*"

The morning after our visit to the Mogul palace, we drove far out upon the plain surrounding Delhi. The object of this expedition was to behold a minaret built in honor of the Moslem general, Kutub, who conquered Delhi seven hundred years ago. It is called after him the Kutub Minar. I gazed

IN THE DAYS OF THE MOGULS.

SARCOPHAGUS OF A NATIVE RULER.

upon it with astonishment. Its color was what first impressed me. It is a beautiful Pompeian red, the material being Indian sandstone. Yet, near the top, with exquisite effect, it wears a circle of white marble, like a coronet of pearls, the two combining with the sky to make the glorious tricolor we see so frequently in India—the red, white, and blue. The entire column is fluted from top to bottom, and to relieve it of monotony, it is divided into five sections, marked by projecting galleries of the finest sculpture, so delicately carved that they may be compared to bracelets on a lady's arm. So solidly was this stupendous tower constructed, that not only are its ornamentations still perfect, but not the least crack in its masonry can be discovered, inside or out, despite the lapse of seven hundred years. Some think this to have been a monument of victory rather than a minaret, but it may well have answered both these purposes. At all events, it is the most imposing emblem of Mohammedan power that this earth can show. With the exception of the Washington obelisk, it is the tallest isolated monument in the world. Utterly distinct from any building, this splendid shaft shoots upward to the height of two hundred and fifty feet, tapering gradually all the way, till from a circuit of one hundred and fifty feet at the base, it holds against the sky a ring but ten feet in diameter. Moreover, upon its surface are beautifully carved decorations which may



THE KUTUB MINAR.

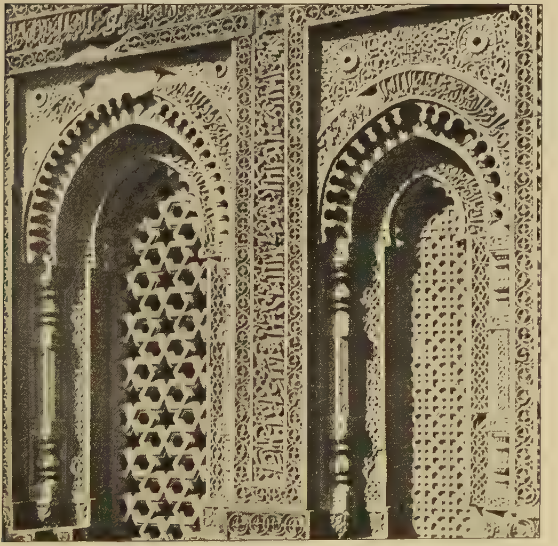
be compared to sculptured rings. They are broad bands of letters cut into the solid stone, and reproduce in well-nigh indestructible form passages from the Koran. One of them reads as follows: "Allah invites to Paradise and brings into the way of righteousness all who are willing to enter." Unutterably solemn, therefore, seems this mighty column, looking majestically down from its imposing height upon the silent desolation of the plain. For though from this, the grandest of all Moslem minarets, no voice now calls to prayer, these Arabic inscriptions still proclaim, as they have done for centuries, the mercy and the majesty of God. As I turned thoughtfully away from it, I could but ask myself: "If the Europeans were to relinquish India to-morrow, what buildings would they leave worthy to be compared for a moment either with this glorious minaret or with the peerless structures of the Great Moguls?"

EUROPEAN RESIDENCES.

By night the plain surrounding Delhi presents a scene of singular desolation. Upon a site once swarming with tumultuous life, a few poor hovels are the only human habitations. Yet everywhere, like wreckage floating on the sea, lie the

ONE OF THE KUTUB MINAR'S RINGS.

memorials of former greatness. Dilapidated walls, deserted fortresses, ruined mosques, solitary gateways, and crumbling towers are constantly in sight, some still retaining vestiges of strength, others long since reduced to masses of débris. One of these structures is of extraordinary beauty. It is the oldest Moslem tomb known to exist in India, and certainly there are few so richly decorated. The roof, indeed, is gone, and the sarcophagus of alabaster which it protected is now unsheltered from the sun and rain; but the old walls remain intact, and in their frost-like tracery in stone



EXQUISITE STONE TRACERY NEAR DELHI.

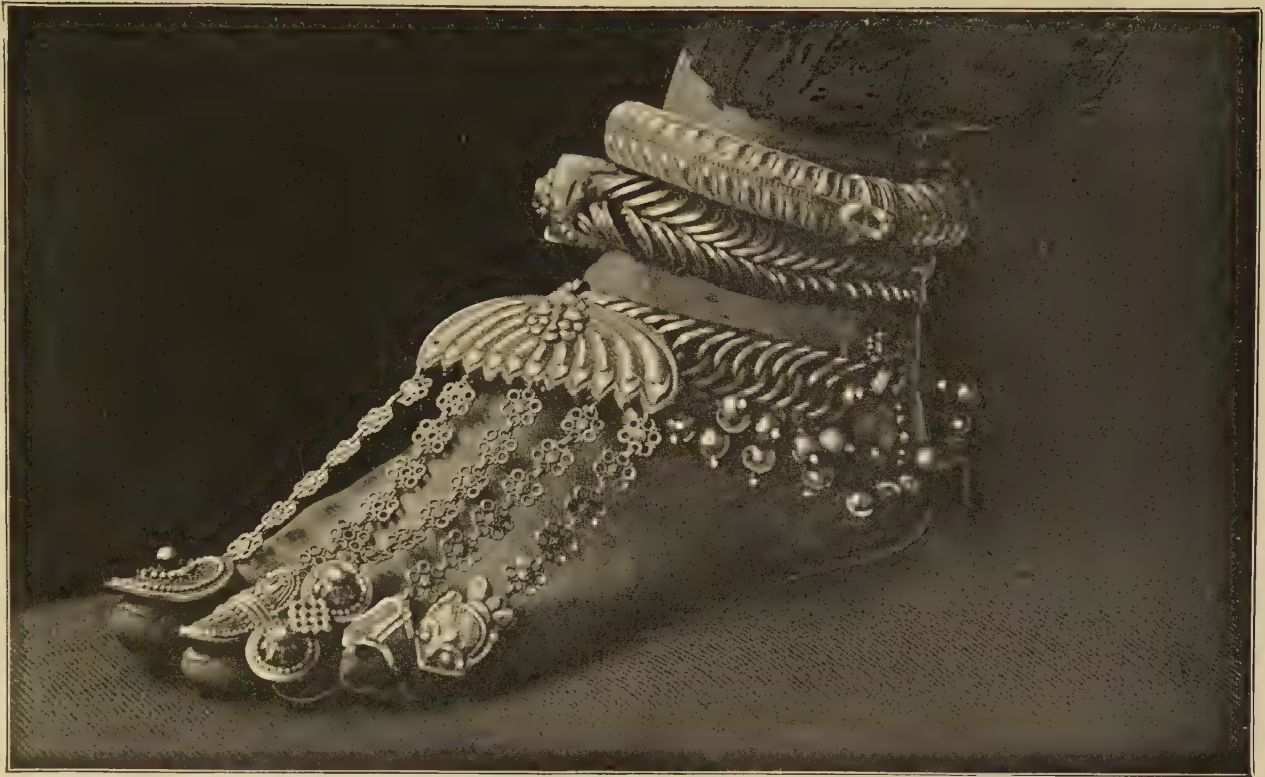
remind one of the enchanting work of the Alhambra. Similar tombs are scattered broadcast on this plain; yet what do we really know of any of the kings and warriors buried in them? A feeling of profound sadness took possession of me here, and I recalled the appropriate verses of the Persian poet, Omar Khayyam, written a hundred years before the Kutub Minar arose above this plain.

TRAVELING WITH ELEPHANTS.

"Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

"Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destin'd Hour, and went his way.

"When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.



THE FOOT OF A PRINCESS.

"Ah, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
To-DAY of past Regret and future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years.

"Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!"

The name of Delhi is forever associated with the great Indian mutiny in 1857, when England was suddenly confronted by a revolt of more than one hundred thousand trained Sepoys, or native soldiers, whom she had enrolled, as she supposed, for her defense. A spirit of discontent and hatred of the English had long been latent throughout India, but the immediate cause of the uprising was, as usual in all Indian troubles, a religious one. Cartridges had been given to the troops, and these, it was reported, were greased with lard or tallow, to bite into which (as soldiers were then obliged to do) was to the Hindus a contamination worse than death. The rumor of this sacrilege spread like wild-fire, and regiment after regiment murdered its English officers and

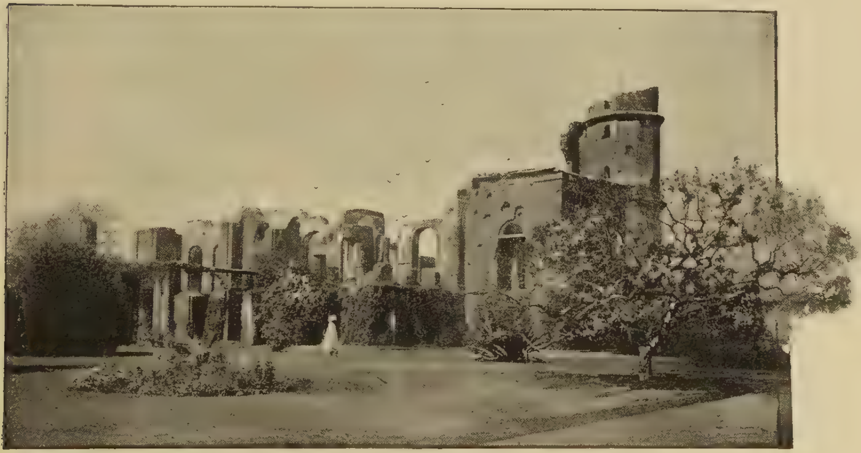
OLD MOSLEM TOMB NEAR DELHI.

turned against the Europeans the weapons they had been taught to use. One part of Delhi is revered by every lover of brave men and valiant deeds. It is the grave of General Nicholson, the hero of the siege of the city in 1857. The superbly built fortress of the Mogul emperors was then held by sixty thousand well-armed natives, many of whom had been soldiers of the British army. Nevertheless, an English force of only seven thousand men, led by the gallant Nicholson, resolved to dislodge them. To do this it was necessary to make an entrance through a structure called the Cashmere

SITE OF THE OLD MOAT.

THE CASHMERE GATE, DELHI.

Gate. This Nicholson ordered to be blown up. It was a desperate undertaking, for it was then surrounded with a moat; but four intrepid heroes volunteered to attempt it. With heavy bags of powder on their heads, they dashed across the moat. The foremost was shot dead; the second fell to rise no more; the third reached the gate and laid the powder, but was wounded; the fourth, however, lighted the train and sprang into the ditch. A moment later there was a fearful explosion, the ponderous gate was shattered, and the English troops rushed in to victory and—in the case of Nicholson—to death.

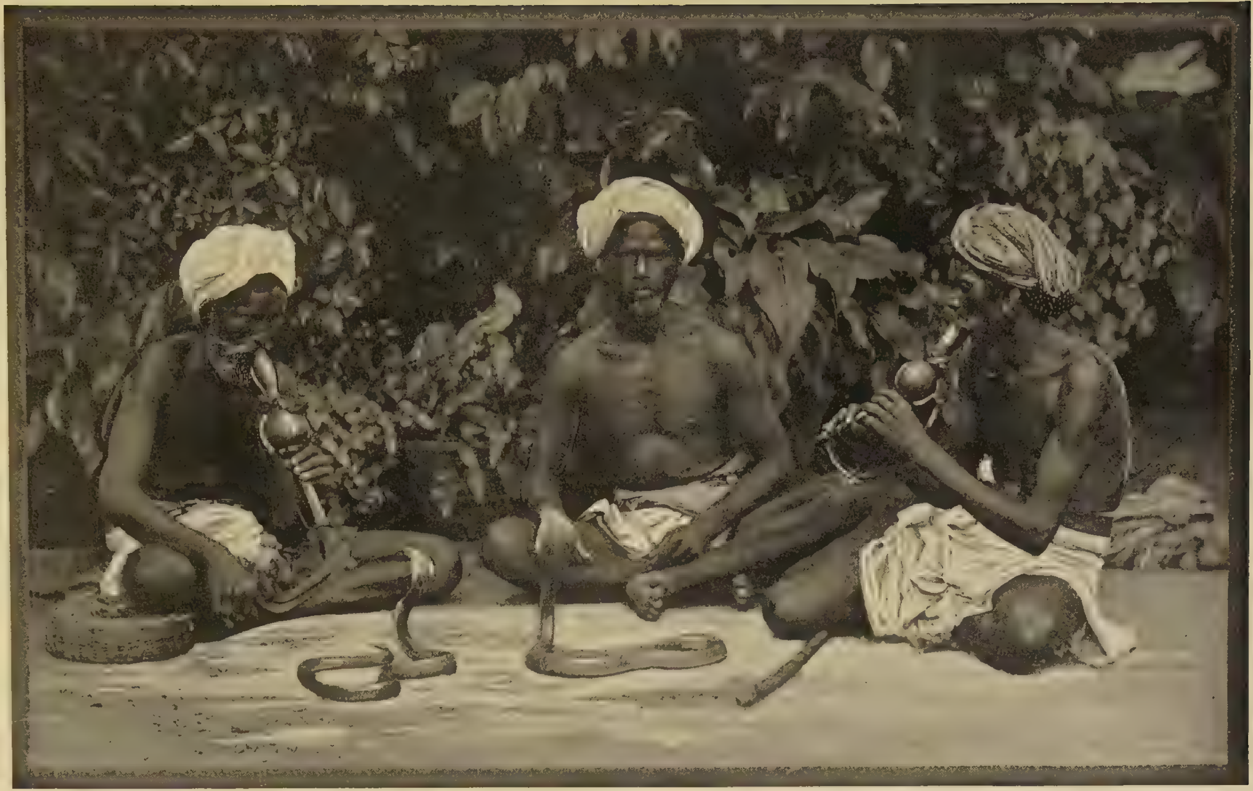


THE RESIDENCY, LUCKNOW.

This memorial of British valor was still fresh in our minds when, shortly after leaving Delhi, we reached Lucknow and stood within its former Residency. It is now a ruin, deeply scarred by shot and shell; but vines and flowers do their best to hide the ravages of cruelty and strife, and its old walls possess a serene and melancholy beauty peculiarly their own. Here, at the time of the mutiny, the position was exactly the reverse of that at Delhi. In this case, the English were the besieged. Scantily protected by these walls, through five long months of Indian summer heat, a force of about sixteen hundred fighting men, encumbered by five hundred women and children, heroically kept at bay no less than fifty thousand natives, who were not ignorant savages with uncouth instruments of war, but well-armed native soldiers, trained by British officers.

THE OLD WALLS AT LUCKNOW.

Passing beyond the Baillie gate, through which at last, after those awful months of siege, the rescuing army forced its way, we saw the room where the commander of that garrison, the lion-hearted Henry Lawrence, when mortally wounded by a shell, received the sacrament and breathed his last. He was almost the only man in India who had foreseen the coming storm in time to store up ammunition and prepare for war. As a rule, the mutiny took the British by surprise. So thoroughly had they relied upon their native regiments, that many British troops had been called home for the Crimean War. Only about twenty thousand English soldiers had been left in India, and these were scattered over an enormous territory, with scarcely any railroads to facili-



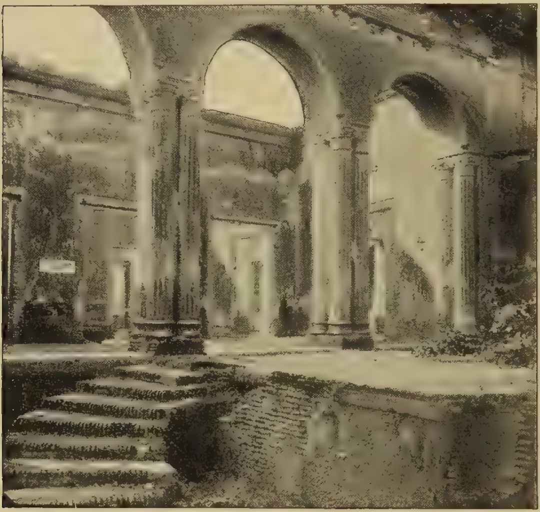
SNAKE-CHARMERS.

tate their concentration. One can but marvel, therefore, that any foreigners were left to tell the tale. But English steadfastness and valor proved too much for even those appalling odds, and India was saved to England by just such heroes as Sir Henry Lawrence, who, as his life blood ebbed away, whispered the words inscribed upon his tomb: "I have tried to do my duty. May the Lord have mercy on my soul."

THE BAILLIE GATE, LUCKNOW.

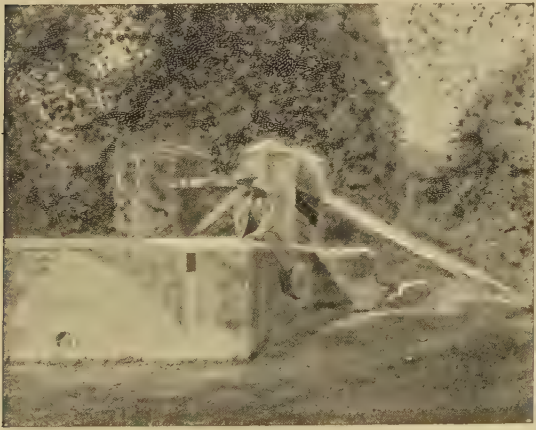
When the remains of this noble patriot and Christian were laid to rest, the fighting was so severe that none of his officers dared to leave his post. But, one by one, the soldiers who bore him to the grave, ere they lowered him into the earth, lifted the sheet which covered the face of their beloved commander, and reverently kissed his brow.

Still bearing in mind those fearful days of '57, we journeyed from Lucknow to the town of Cawnpore. Tranquil enough it seems to-day, yet, forty years ago, there was enacted here one of the most awful tragedies ever recorded on the page of history. There was no fort in Cawnpore, and, accordingly, when the mutiny broke out, the old commander, Sir Hugh Wheeler, assembled all the European residents in an open field, and raised around them a low wall of earth. To defend this position he could only muster about four hundred English soldiers, more than seventy of whom were invalids. Opposed to them were three thousand Sepoys, armed with muskets and cannon. Moreover, into this unsheltered area the dreadful sun of India poured all day long its burning rays, almost as deadly in their effect as shot and shell. Making our way across this ground — mute witness of that physical and mental anguish, —we stood beside the solitary well upon which these poor refugees depended for their water. To get this precious liquid men had to go at night; for in the day, exposed to a sharp fire from the natives, to venture here meant certain death. The sight of it reminds one that two hundred English ladies, who had never known hardship or discomfort, together with many young and delicate children, were forced to lie, half mad with thirst, behind low earthworks, or else in holes dug in the ground, partially shaded from the deadly sun by garments stretched on the points of bayonets.


ROOM WHERE SIR HENRY LAWRENCE DIED.

After twenty-one days, when Sir Hugh Wheeler had himself fallen ill, and when the wretched garrison was desperate from sickness and starvation, they received a proposition from the native leader, Nana. He solemnly swore by the sacred Ganges that if they would surrender and lay down their arms, he would conduct them safely to the river, half a mile away, and send them all in comfortable boats down to the British colony at Allahabad. It was decided to accept the offer. Accordingly, the next morning, having given up their weapons, all the survivors, including the wounded and the children, left the area where they had endured such misery, and started for the river, along a path where there now stands a fine memorial church erected in their honor. Nana, upon whose promise they were thus relying, cannot be classed with any Zulu chief or

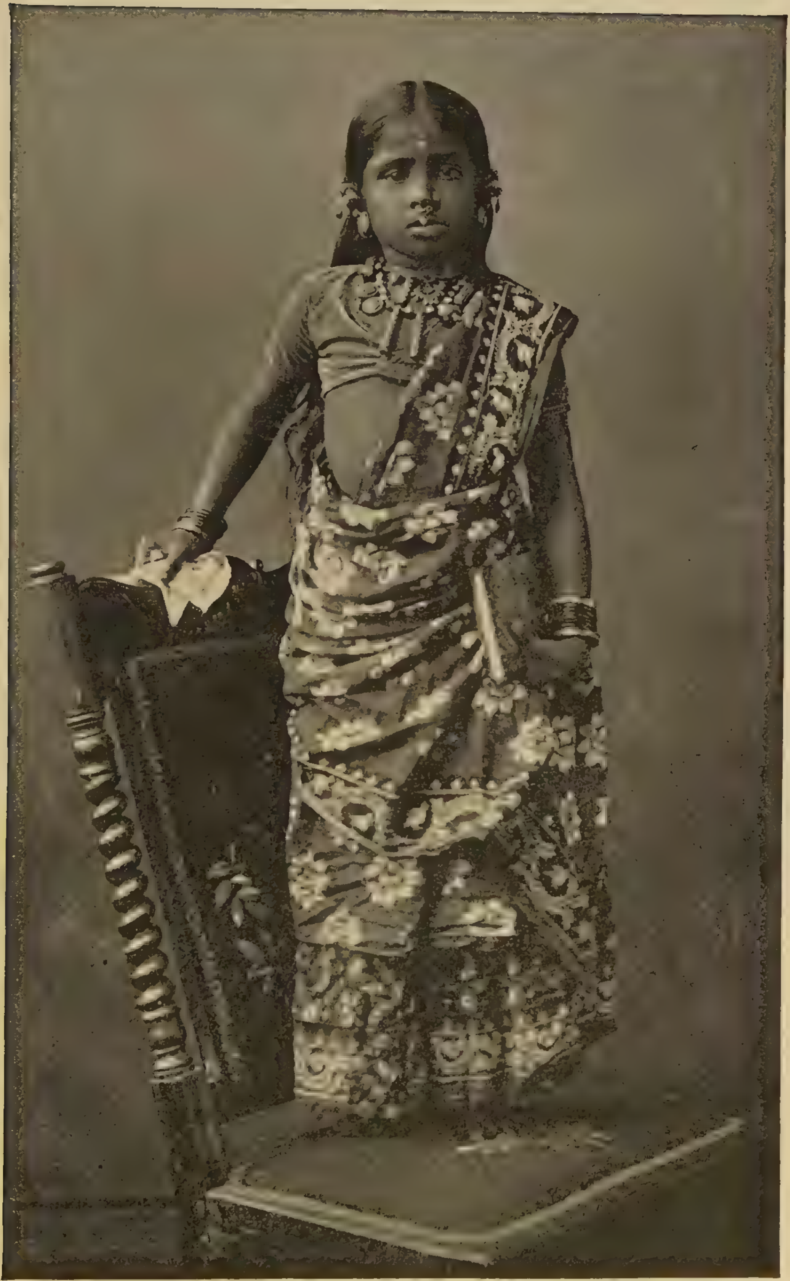
THE FIELD AT CAWNPORE.



THE WELL.

North American Indian. He was a native prince,—the owner of a splendid palace. Some of the ladies then tottering toward the river, more dead than alive, had danced at balls given at his residence. The officers, too, had drunk champagne with him and thought him a most courteous fellow—for an Indian. The reason for Nana's treachery is plain. His father, when dethroned by England like so many other Indian princes, had been richly pensioned. Upon his death, Nana demanded the continuance of the pension. The British Government refused. Thenceforth, beneath that prince's suave and elegant manners lurked a thirst for vengeance. No one suspected him — he was so hospitable, so refined! Even his secretary had been lionized in London, and had

A VILLAGE STREET.



A PRINCESS.

THE MEMORIAL CHURCH.

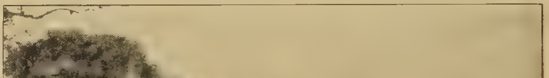
been sent to the Crimea to study the art of war.

Beside the river is a stairway known as the "Staircase of the Massacre." Down these steps the prisoners made their way with hope and joy. The boats were there. "Surely," they thought, "there is no treachery: Nana has kept his word." While the women and children gladly went on board, on one side of the staircase stood the Englishmen; upon the other, Nana and his officers. Suddenly Nana raised his sword. It was the signal for the butchery. At once a battery, till then concealed, poured on the wretched prisoners a storm of grape-shot. Sir Hugh fell dead at once. Only

THE GRAVE OF MANY HEROES, CAWNPORE.

four wounded men, by feigning death and floating down the stream, succeeded in escaping. The women and children, however — then a company of widows and orphans — were brought on shore, reserved for a more dreadful fate. Filled with unutterable horror, they must have envied then their husbands, fathers, and brothers, who had been killed before their eyes. A beautiful memorial park now occupies the place to which they were conducted. Here, for three weeks, in the appalling heat of India in July, two hundred and six European ladies and children were pent up in two stifling rooms. Upon the women the natives inflicted such insults as they liked, for they well knew that nothing would so lacerate English hearts as brutal treatment of their women. But when the troops of General Havelock

NEAR THE STEPS OF SLAUGHTER.



THE STAIRCASE OF THE MASSACRE.

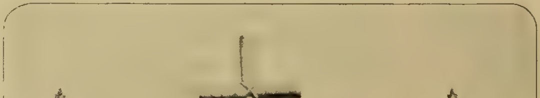
were reported to be near, Nana ordered all these prisoners to be brought out and shot. In an agony of dread, the women clung to each other so closely that it was impossible to separate them. Accordingly, the butchers finally rushed in upon them with drawn swords and bayonets, and amid heart-rending shrieks and piteous prayers the deed was done. There is in Cawnpore now a soldier who was one of the army of General Havelock, and who arrived here just four hours after the massacre. He told us that when he first beheld the scene of this slaughter he almost fell to the earth with horror. Upon the walls were traced in blood a few agonized messages to friends at home. There, too, were bullet-marks and sabre-cuts; not high up, as if men had fought with men, but low down and about the corners, where the poor crouching victims had been cut to pieces. Saddest of all, scattered upon the blood-smeared floor, were locks of golden hair and little children's shoes and playthings. The sight of these things drove the English troops to madness, and bearded men who had beheld, unmoved, the horrors of a hundred battles, sat down and wept in sickening anguish; then rose again, steeled evermore against a cry for mercy!

A VETERAN OF HAVELOCK'S ARMY.

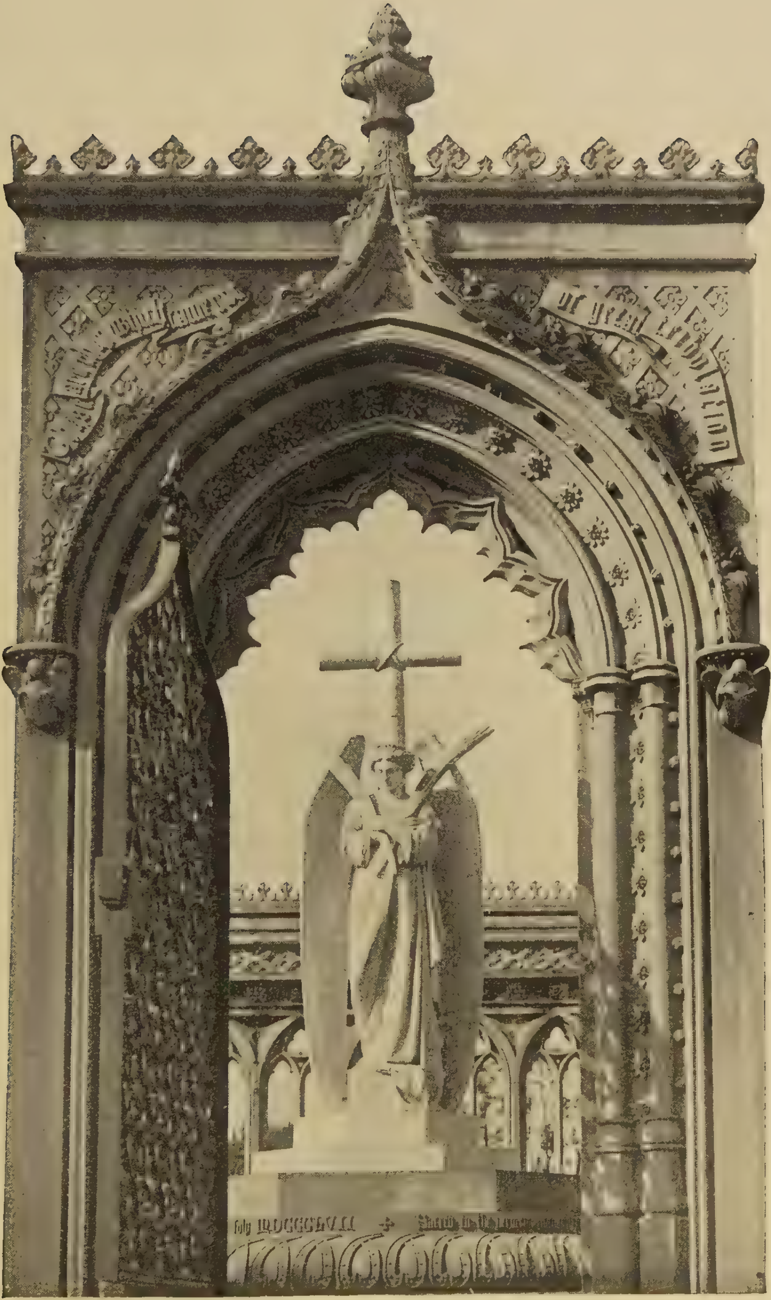
In the memorial park, surrounded by a beautifully sculptured screen, is the historic well, whither, on seeing the natives coming toward them, ten English women rushed, and, without hesitation, first threw their children in and then leaped

FORMER HOME OF NANA.

in themselves. Into this abyss the mutilated remains of those who had been massacred were also subsequently thrown, — mothers and children, the dying and the dead in one red, palpitating mass. Above this well, which forms the burial-place of more than two hundred victims, an angel stands in snow-white raiment, so pure, so beautiful, and so pathetic from the memories which it evokes that at the sight the eyes grow dim with tears. One feels that it is "holy ground." The angel's arms are crossed upon the breast in resignation, while in each hand is held the martyr's palm. Over the archway is inscribed: "These are they who came out of great tribulation." Around the well-curb, too, I read these words: "Sacred to the perpetual memory of the great company of Christian people, chiefly women and children, who



THE MEMORIAL WELL.



MONUMENT AT CAWNPORE.

near this spot were cruelly massacred by the followers of the rebel Nana, and cast, the dying with the dead, into the well below, on the 15th day of July, 1857."

"No native is allowed to enter this enclosure," said the old soldier who here serves as guardian. We could not wonder at the law.

Leaving this hallowed spot, we drove to a point beside the river Ganges, whence we could see the former residence of Nana,—the wretch upon whose guilty soul rests this inhuman crime. What became of him no one can tell. The British government offered a reward for his arrest, but he was never found. Some think this human tiger perished in the jungle. Others maintain that he is still alive, living in safety in the north of India, beyond the English lines. At all events, his fiendish work is over now, and the historic stream, once stained with England's bravest blood, now flows on peaceful and clear, just as within the lovely garden at the well the air which once resounded to the shrieks of anguish now echoes to the songs of birds.

AN INDIAN LANDSCAPE.

In addition to the tragedy at Cawnpore, horrible deeds of cruelty were enacted in other parts of India. In Delhi, delicate ladies and beautiful young girls were stripped of their clothing and driven naked through the streets, stoned, beaten, pelted with offal, and finally given over to the brutal passions of the rabble, until the terrified and horror-stricken women became raving maniacs or sank in death. More than once the fiends snatched children from their mother's arms and dashed their brains out on the walls. Some families, too, are said to have been burned to death. Surely, it is not strange that when the English once more gained the mastery, they blew a number of these demons from the cannon's mouth.

A SOLDIER AND CAMEL.

A few days after leaving Cawnpore, I saw, in company with an English officer, some native regiments on parade. I asked him frankly what he thought about the chances of another mutiny. His answer was a guarded one. "We are more careful now," he said: "our British force will never again be so reduced as it was in '57. It numbered then only 39,000 men as compared with 225,000 native soldiers. Moreover, while we use Indian troops for infantry and cavalry, we keep most of the cannon in our own hands; and do not forget that we have now a system of railways and telegraphs, which means that we can put down any insurrection quickly and effectively." But several civilians with whom we conversed

NATIVE TROOPS.

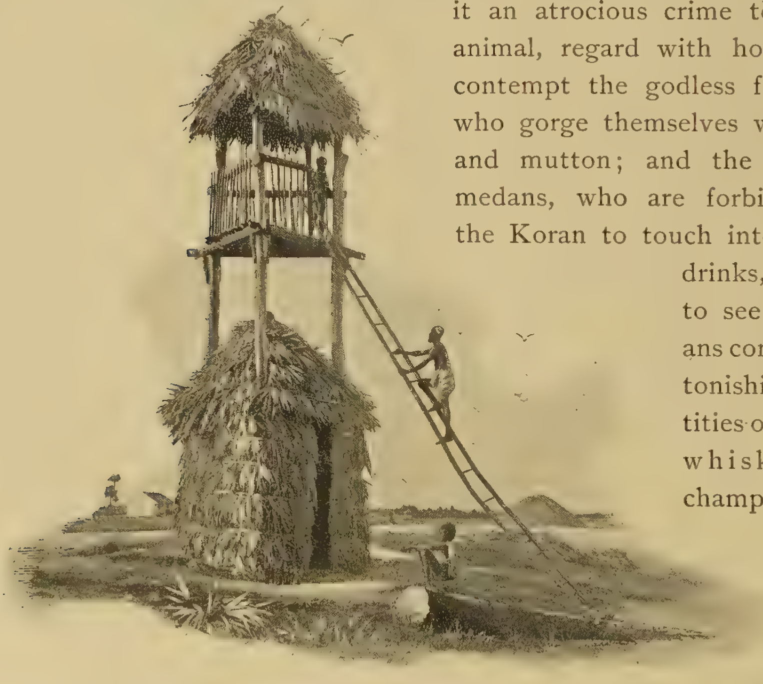
did not take this optimistic view. According to them, a vast majority of Hindus and Mohammedans would rise to-morrow, if they dared, especially if Russia's guns began to rouse the echoes of the Himalayas. Their first step undoubtedly would be to cut the telegraph wires and destroy the railroads; and how much better off, they ask, would Europeans then be in India? Many a Maharajah is said to be secretly as discontented as was the rebel Nana. These fires of hate are merely smouldering now, but who can say they will not some day burst forth into a flame? At all events, it is significant that no natives, outside the army, are allowed to own or carry fire-arms.

AN ENGLISH REGIMENT.

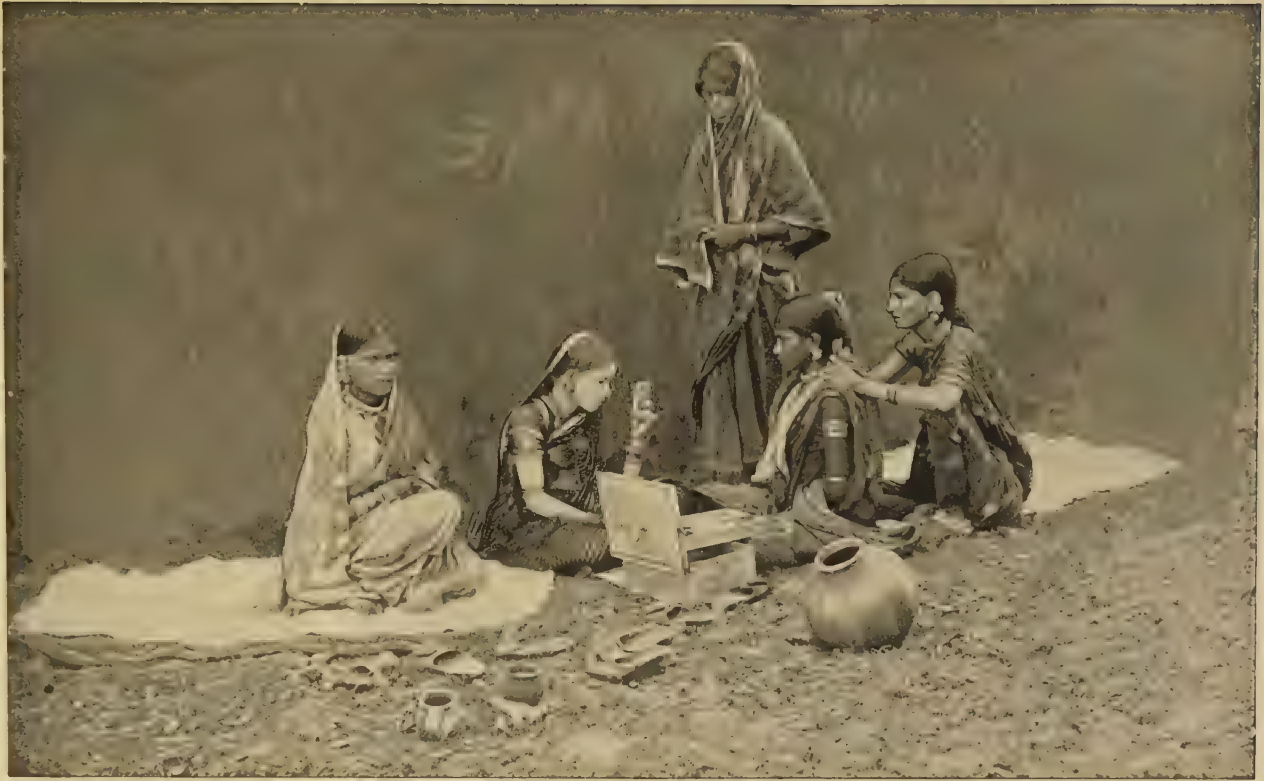
It must be remembered also that, although in her schools and universities England is educating thousands of these natives and giving them employment, nevertheless it is just this class that is most discontented. They have learned enough to believe, and even to assert, that the original inhabitants of a country should govern it, and that it is absurd for a handful of Englishmen, whose home is in another portion of the globe, to rule three hundred million people, entirely distinct from them in race, ideas, customs, and religion. Meantime, at the other end of the social scale are millions of fanatics who hate Europeans from religious motives, and would starve to death rather than eat a particle of food which Christian hands had touched. Between these two opposing forces England stands to-day.

SOME SUBJECTS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

The dwellings of the common peasants on the plains of India suggested to my mind feathered dog-houses, sometimes surmounted by a second story, where the inmates keep a look-out for crows. One readily sees that the vast majority of these people do not understand the character and customs of the men who govern them. The Hindus, for example, living on a little rice, and thinking it an atrocious crime to kill an animal, regard with horror and contempt the godless foreigners who gorge themselves with beef and mutton; and the Mohammedans, who are forbidden by the Koran to touch intoxicating drinks, shudder to see Europeans consume astonishing quantities of brandy, whisky, and champagne. A



A LOOKOUT FOR CROWS.



AN OPEN-AIR BOUDOIR.

story is told of a Hindu servant who was devotedly attached to his English master. When the latter died, the native desired to carry out the Oriental custom of comforting the spirit of the deceased by bringing to his tomb a sample of the food of which, in life, he had been especially fond. Accordingly, he knelt beside his master's grave, and, with tears streaming down his cheeks, poured out to the dead Englishman a copious libation of — brandy and soda.

TEA PICKING IN INDIA.

When one occasionally gains a glimpse of one of the Indian princes whom England has deposed, he naturally asks (as they themselves no doubt, have often done), "What right have the English in India, anyway?" About the same right they have in Burma and a score of other places; the same right that the French possess in Siam, or that various nations now have in the continent of Africa. The recent

AN INDIAN PRINCE.

history of Oriental politics is, after all, a simple one. Stripped of all glittering rhetoric, the situation is just this: Europe desires to control the trade of a certain country, and sends out merchants to obtain it. If the unfortunate country does not wish to trade, Europe bombards her till she yields and business is established. Of course, complications soon arise. The Orient is always in the wrong. A war ensues. The Orient is defeated and must pay indemnity. In order to collect it, European officers are appointed, and the unhappy country is taken under European "protection," which means, eventually, not only annexation, but the appropriation of much private property. There have been writers, even among the English, bold enough to declare that England had no more right to the private jewels of one of the kings whom she dethroned in India than to the crown diamonds of Russia.

Yet, in justice to England, it

PALACE OF A DETHRONED PRINCE.

should be remembered that, although other European nations feign to regard such conduct with the utmost horror, they are all watching for a chance to do the same thing. The principal difficulty seems to be that England has appropriated almost everything in sight. The other nations, therefore, are in the position of the smaller lions, represented in the picture of Daniel in the lion's den, of which a Sunday-school boy once said to his teacher: "Please, ma'am, those little lions in the corner aren't going to get any Daniel at all!" It should be said, however, that England succeeds in her colonization where other nations often fail; for she invariably sends the trader first, and then the soldier. France, on the contrary, usually sends the soldier first, and hence the trader sometimes does not come at all.

A MAHARAJAH.

An incident in my experience well illustrates these different modes of colonization. In sailing down the coast of China, from Hong-Kong to India, we stopped at the French settlement of Saigon. To our surprise, we were there able to attend an opera given by a company brought direct from

Paris. The French Government, at an expense of twenty-five thousand dollars, had sent it out there for the season, to keep the colonists from being so homesick that they would return to France. "Great Heavens!" cried one of our English passengers, "I wish Gladstone would do that for us. But in our colonies life 'means business' from the start. We young men come out here to succeed, or to go to the wall. It is a case of the survival of the fittest. The mother country practically says to every one of us, as she casts us into the world, 'Root, hog, or die.'"

SAILING SOUTH TO INDIA.

That British occupation is on the whole a blessing to India I have not the slightest doubt. Whether the English really have a right to dominate the Mogul Empire, or not, there can be only one opinion as to the superiority of Anglo-Saxon rule over the usual tyranny of Indian princes. The British Government has built in India railways, bridges, highroads, churches, hospitals, and schools. It has established national universities. It has abolished many horrible religious customs, such as the burning alive of widows, and death beneath the car of Juggernaut; and, above all, it has given to India courts of justice, in which all natives, rich or poor,

A RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL.

Brahmins or Pariahs, can have their rights defended by the grand old principles of English law.

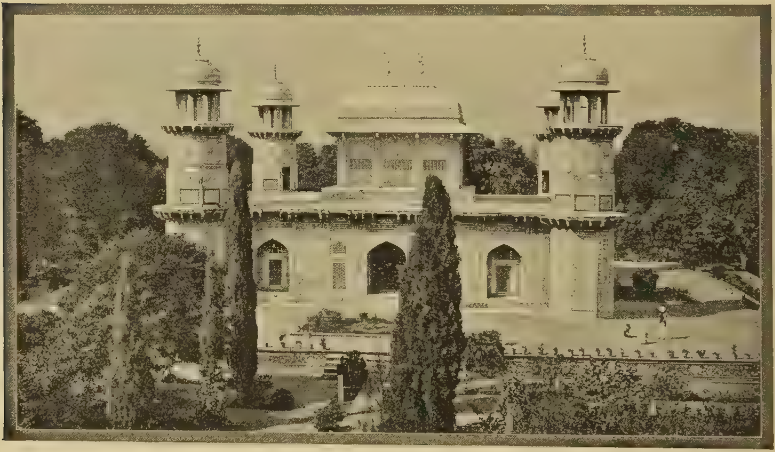
The city which, more than all the rest of India, delights and satisfies the traveler, lies in the heart of the old Mogul Empire and is known as Agra. It surpasses even Delhi in its magnificent memorials of the Mogul dynasty. Three structures are especially remarkable in this old capital of Akbar: the Mausoleum of the Prince Itmad-ud-Daulat, the Mogul Palace, and the Taj Mahal. It is true, the first of these lies across the river Jumna, at a little distance from the city, and many tourists fail to visit it. But were it not for its proximity to the incomparable Taj, this tomb would be regarded as one of the marvels of India and would

STONE CARVINGS OF AN INDIAN TEMPLE.

AN INDIAN RAILWAY STATION.

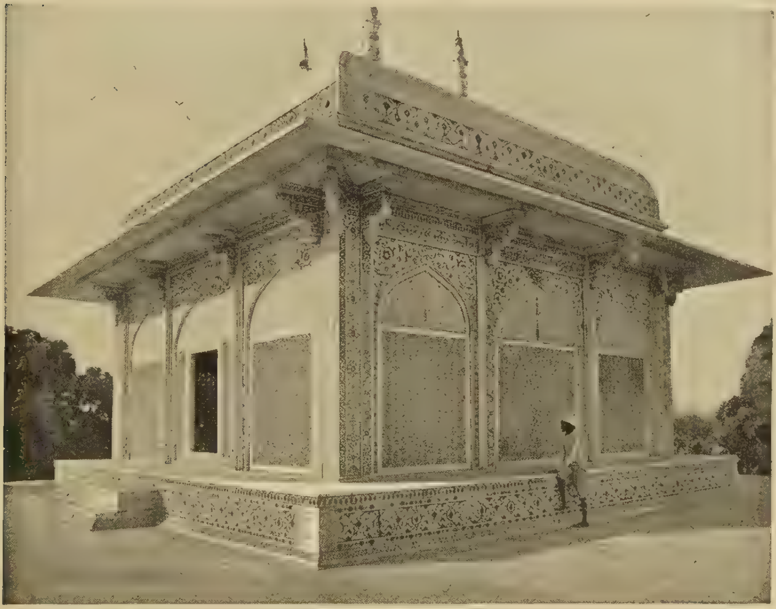
of itself repay a lengthy pilgrimage.

Itmad-ud-Daulat was the father-in-law and prime minister of the Mogul emperor, Jahangir, who succeeded his father Akbar in 1605. His mausoleum stands, as is usually the case in India, in a beautiful garden, whose foliage and flowers form a lovely framework for the pure white marble of the edifice. The Oriental architects who worked for the Moguls thoroughly understood the value of perspective and the solemnity and dignity imparted to such structures by a gradual approach on



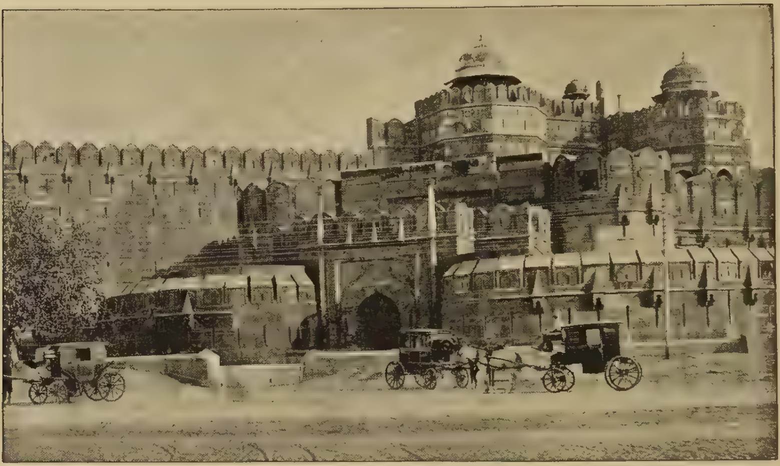
TOMB OF ITMAD-UD-DAULAT, AGRA.

marble pavements framed in verdure. This building is so perfectly proportioned that it is a constant pleasure to behold it, even from a distance, and when one comes to its threshold and examines it in detail, his admiration is unbounded. For the entire edifice without and within, in its windows, doors, walls, and graceful towers is a masterpiece of carved and perforated marble, inlaid with precious stones. On the outside, the walls are beautiful expanses of the mosaic work called *pietra dura*, arranged in rectangles, diagonals, diamonds, cubes, stars, and other geometrical designs. While the arches are adorned with flowers carved in marble, the inner walls and niches are embellished with flowers in mosaic, whose colors, set in jewels, never fade. In the place of windows also are placed alabaster screens, so exquisitely cut and perforated that they appear like white lace curtains, through whose fine apertures the sunbeams filter to a dust of gold.



A GORGEOUS MAUSOLEUM.

This tomb is not a rival of the Taj Mahal. It could not be, for the Taj is the most beautiful structure in the world. But, being smaller, this can perhaps be studied to better advantage, and, since the style of decoration in both buildings is very similar, this can explain some features of the greater edifice, which might, in the confused emotions there awakened, escape our notice. Moreover, the Taj appeals to us as an expression of man's love for woman. This tomb has no such sentiment connected with it, and merely marks the resting-place of one almost unknown to history, and whose very name is spelled in half a dozen ways. Nevertheless, it is one of the most beautifully proportioned and richly decorated buildings in the world; and as I turned at the entrance of the lovely garden to take a farewell view of its enameled walls and jeweled towers, I thought the scene a perfect illustration of the well known lines:



THE FORT AT AGRA.

"A palace lifting to eternal summer
Its marble halls from out a glossy bower
Of coolest foliage, musical with birds."

GROUP OF FEMALE TEACHERS.

In Agra as in Delhi, stands a mighty fortress, built by Akbar. I could not think of this as a mere citadel. It seemed rather a city in itself; for it is nearly two miles in circumference, and is entirely enclosed by ramparts seventy feet in height. Around it winds a moat a hundred feet in breadth, from which at frequent intervals rise massive towers, like mediæval castles on the Rhine. The color of this belt of masonry is a deep red, which in the glow of sunset is suggestive of the sanguinary scenes it has so often looked upon. At such a time one easily fancies that the moat itself is filled with blood, whose horrible reflection paints itself upon the stone.

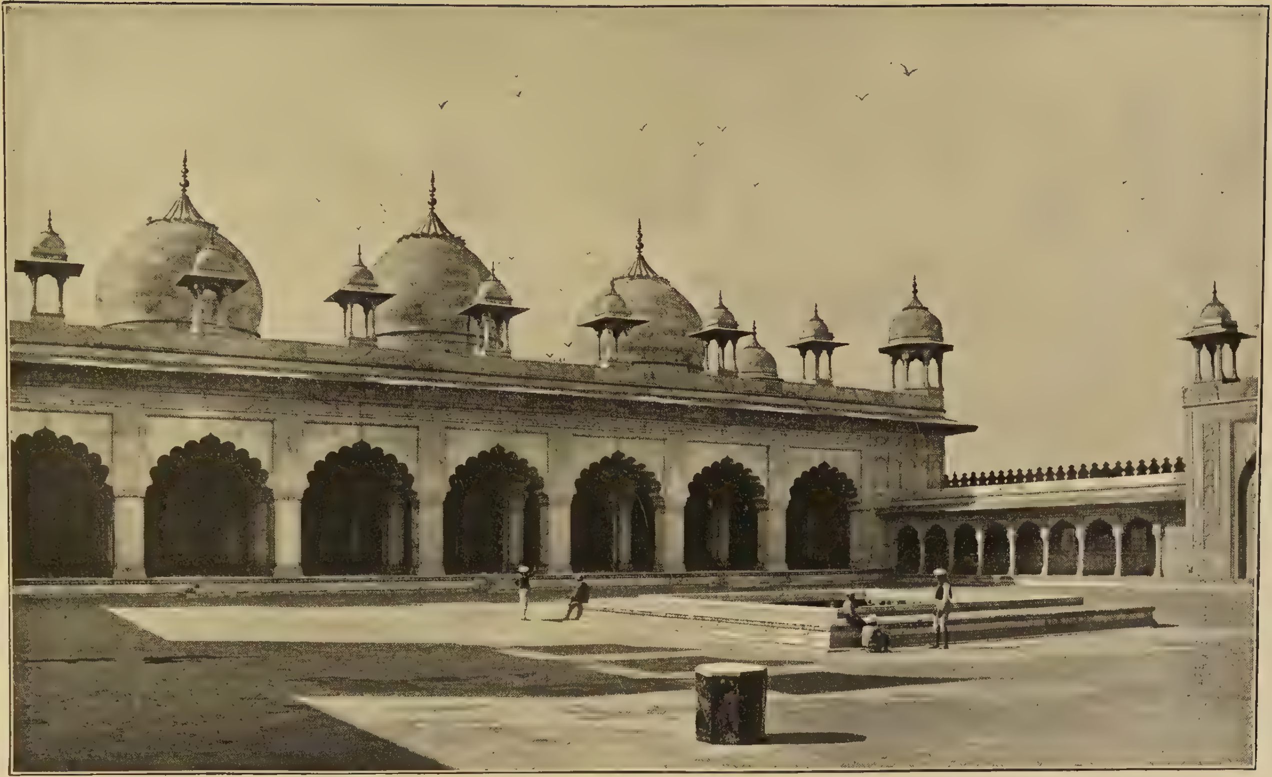
Its massive gateway, guarded constantly by sentinels, is a reminder that the primary object of this structure is defense. At all events, a large amount of arms and ammunition is now stored within its walls; and in the event of another mutiny, this would become invaluable as a place of refuge. In the days of the Mogul emperors this fortress was a kind of strong box, containing the palace and the sacred treasures of the empire. To some extent it is so still. For, though the throne of the Moguls has fallen, and their resplendent diadems and diamond-hilted swords have all passed into other hands,

THE GATEWAY.

yet even now this beautifully sculptured casket holds some architectural jewels that have few equals in the world.

The first of these to greet the tourist as soon as he has passed the portal, is called the Pearl Mosque, and from its spotless purity and beauty it deserves the name; for everywhere in its enclosure,—roof, columns, walls, and pavement are as white as alabaster. No other sanctuary on earth exhibits such simplicity and purity. Here are no images or paintings, or even gilding; one is surrounded only by the chaste white marble with vines and flowers carved upon it in relief. Oh, the immeasurable superiority of this immaculate pearl of Oriental architecture over the sickening idolatry and filth of Hinduism! No furniture, not even a rug, profanes this beautiful expanse; but the marble pavement is carefully divided by the sculptor's chisel into rectangular spaces, on each of which a follower of Mahomet may kneel in prayer. What an example is this of the restraining power of the Mohammedan religion! For, more than twelve hundred years ago, the Koran forbade the followers of the Prophet to make any

A CORNER OF THE FORT, AGRA.



EXTERIOR OF THE PEARL MOSQUE.

likeness of animal life, lest it should lead to idolatry; and during all these centuries that rule has been obeyed. The Moslems, it is true, have thus been kept from cultivating painting and sculpture, but what have they not accomplished in architecture, from Granada to Damascus, and from these Mogul palaces to the Taj Mahal!

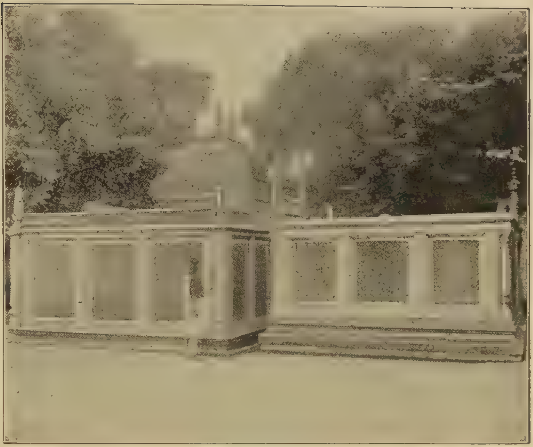
THE PEARL MOSQUE.

At a little distance from this mosque, but still within the fort, stands the palace in which the Mogul emperors resided when at Agra. It seems as if the inmates of such glorious halls should have led lives as full of joy as their apartments were of beauty. Yet sculptured stone, however exquisite, can never satisfy the heart, and even jeweled walls cannot

A PAVILION, AGRA.

atone for loss of liberty. So it was here. Its builder was the lavish Shah Jehan, who also built the equally magnificent palace at Delhi and the incomparable Taj Mahal. And yet he spent the last seven years of his life here, a hopeless captive, imprisoned by his rebellious son; experiencing thus that bitterest of sorrows,—ill-treatment and ingratitude from a heartless child. One thing, however, gave Shah Jehan some consolation; for, when all others had abandoned him, his faithful daughter would not leave him. She voluntarily shared his long imprisonment, striving to make her

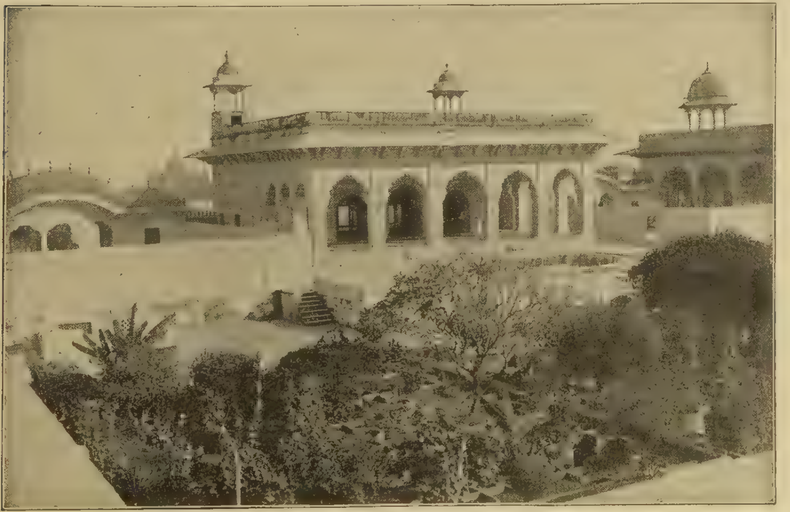
A MARBLE SCREEN.



TOMB OF JEHANARA.

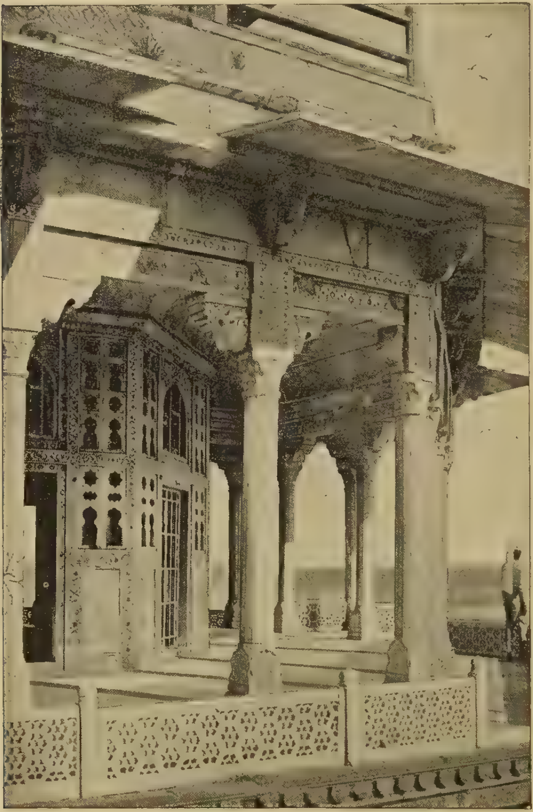
love atone for all that he had lost. Her very name, "Jehanara," was but the softened echo of his own, and it was in giving birth to this child that the Emperor's idolized wife had died. Renowned for wit and beauty, she might have held a brilliant place at her brother's court; but she preferred the prison of her father, displaying thus the noble traits of character that have immortalized her memory.

Nothing in India is more pathetic than her burial-place. Having seen the hollowness of royal luxury, she begged,



A PORTION OF THE PALACE AT AGRA.

when on her death-bed, that grass and flowers should be her only covering. Her wish has been respected. It is true an alabaster screen now forms a frame-work for her couch of death, but the space thus enclosed is covered merely with green turf. Upon the marble headstone are inscribed these words: "Let no rich canopy adorn my grave. These simple flowers are most appropriate for one who was poor in spirit, though the daughter of Shah Jehan."



THE PRISON OF SHAH JEHAN.

The pavilion in which the Mogul sovereign was imprisoned was, like all the rest of the palace, replete with luxury and beauty; yet its inmate was a broken-hearted man. He had enjoyed unlimited power: it was his no more. He had erected buildings which even to-day astonish and delight the world: this he could do no longer. He had so dearly loved his wife, that when she died he reared for her the fairest mausoleum which this earth has ever seen; yet when it was completed he could not enter it

HIMALAYAN SCENERY.

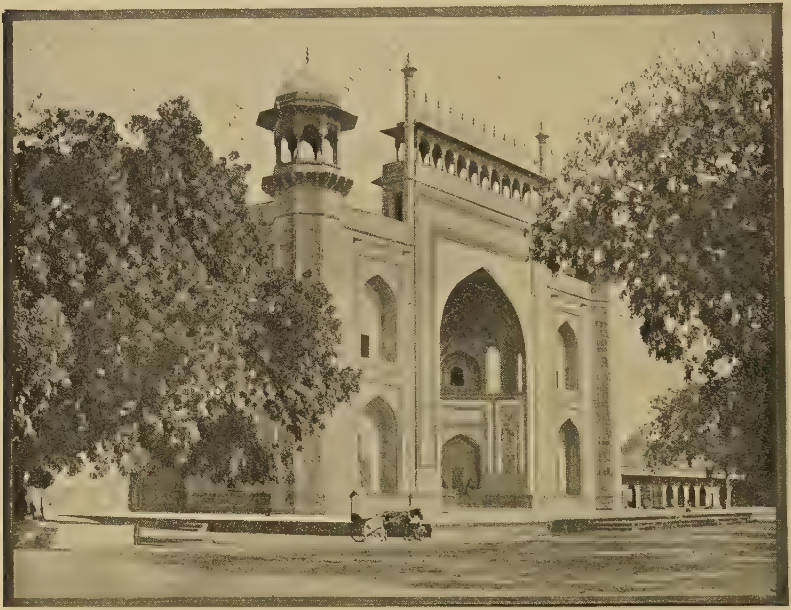
to weep beside her grave. Worse than all, the man who had thus robbed him of his throne, his wealth, his occupation, and his liberty, besides murdering his three remaining sons, was his own child by the woman he had so adored!

In realizing these facts, one naturally asks: "Was not this Mogul emperor a Mohammedan, and do not Moslems usually regard their wives as pretty toys,—mere creatures of a day, who have not even souls to insure them immortality?" Undoubtedly; and this, indeed, is the mystery and marvel of it all, that such a man (the sovereign of an Eastern court, with all material pleasures open to his choice) should have so idolized his lawful wife that when she died he vowed to build for her the grandest tomb that man could frame, and kept his promise, too, although the work required twenty years. Yet this woman, who was the joy and light of his life, was no young bride, whose early death had made her seem to him

AUDIENCE HALL AND TERRACE, AGRA.

an ideal character. She was the mother of his children; and when at last she died in his arms, he had been wedded to her fourteen years.

We stood with reverence beside the window of his room, and saw in the distance, as he so often did, the peerless monument of love he reared to her,—the Taj Mahal. Toward those white domes, whose soft reflection lay like pearls within the adjacent stream, his dying eyes were turned as over them crept the film of death. Within that wonderful edifice he is buried with the one he loved. For, far more merciful in death than he had been in life, his son allowed the body of the deposed emperor to be borne thither to repose beside that wife whom this majestic structure will make famous to the end of time.



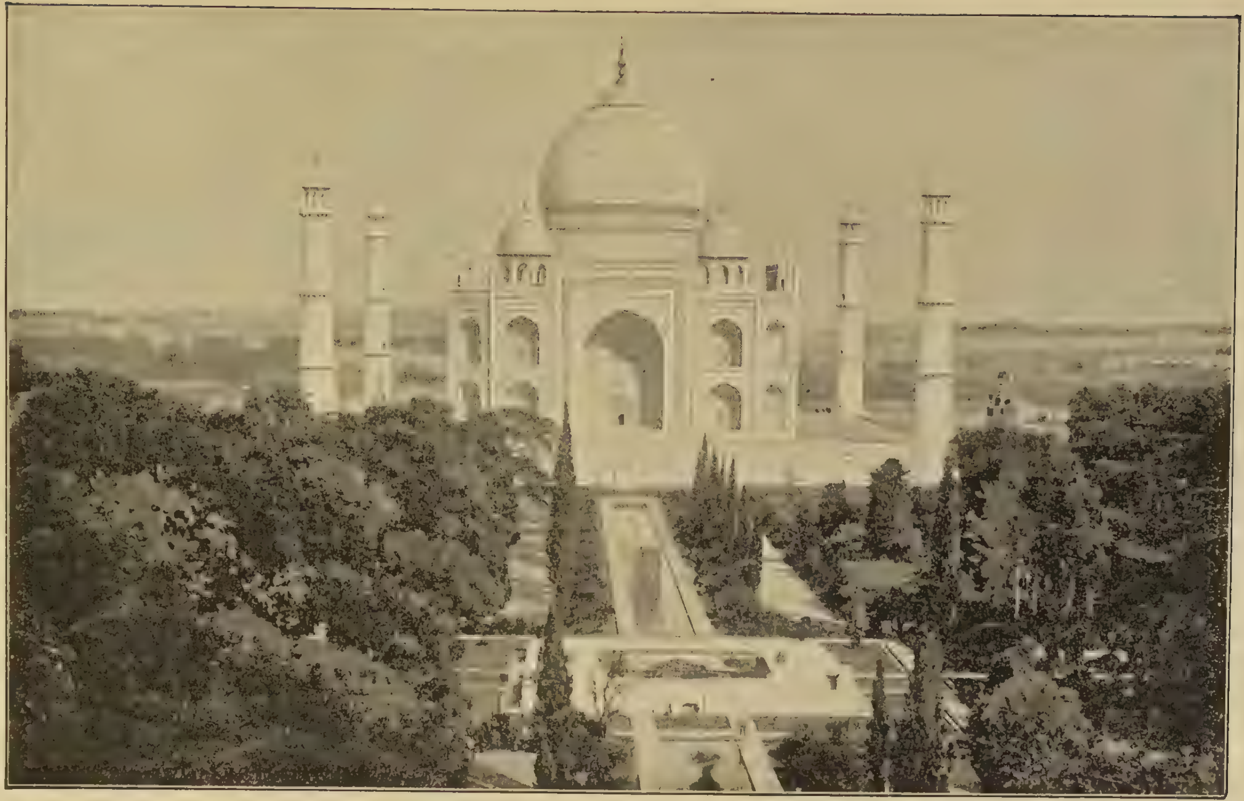
THE ENTRANCE TO THE GARDEN OF THE TAJ.

Leaving the Mogul palace, we drove along the river to the beautiful park of forty acres that surrounds the Taj. This garden, which is to the Taj what the setting is to the jewel, is entirely enclosed by a lofty wall. Grandeur and beauty here go hand in hand, for the gateway to this area is no less than one hundred and forty feet in height and a hundred feet in breadth, and its red sandstone frame is exquisitely decorated with mosaic in white marble. Impatient, however, to behold a still greater treasure, we passed beneath this portal and gazed upon the Taj itself. It was still distant. Between us and its pure white form we saw a garden of great beauty. Down through the centre led a stately avenue with marble pavement white as snow. Beside it was a canal of water, from which at times a score of fountains rose like silver trees. Within its limpid flood a thousand goldfish gleamed like jewels in the sunlight. On the right and left stood rows of cypress trees, like funeral plumes; while farther still were groves of palms and orange trees, whose foliage is swayed by breezes fragrant with the breath of flowers. Thousands of roses bloom here during the entire year, sacred to death and to a deathless love. Speechless, as in a dream, we walked on through this flowery paradise, and drew still nearer to the Taj. Letting our gaze move slowly from its base to its

LOOKING TOWARD THE TAJ.

summit, two hundred and ninety-six feet, above our heads, we noted, first, a massive platform of red sandstone, measuring on each side a thousand feet. From this a marble terrace rises to serve as a pedestal for the Taj itself. As for the structure in the centre, the first bewildering glance revealed what seemed to be a delicately sculptured mountain of pure alabaster, supporting on its crest a sparkling dome, light as a radiant bubble, which might at any moment float away and vanish into air. After one rapturous look at its sublime proportions the last doubt was dispelled forever. The conquest was complete; and I became a worshiper of the Taj, like all the millions who had gone before me. The fundamental secret of this charm, like that of most things that are truly great, is its simplicity. It is not complicated in design. It has the purity and simple majesty of the Jungfrau. It is to Saracenic, what the Athenian Parthenon was to Grecian art. The mind can grasp it without effort. Its perfect harmony recalls the phrase of Madame de Staël, that "architecture is frozen music." One part balances another, the platform is proportioned to the pedestal, the smaller domes to the great central one, and the minarets to the entire structure. It is the one completely faultless edifice that man

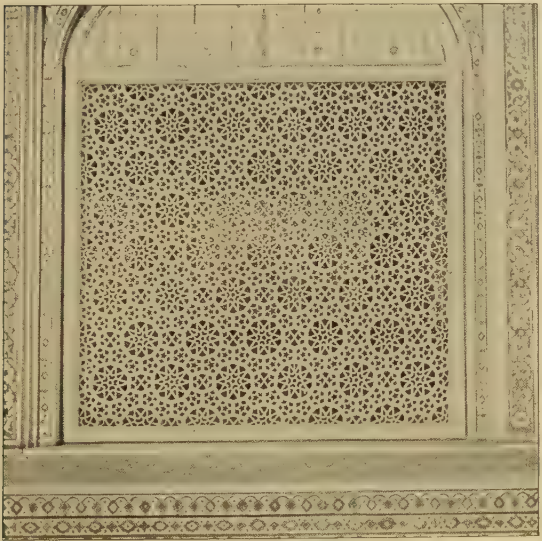
A MOUNTAIN OF ALABASTER.



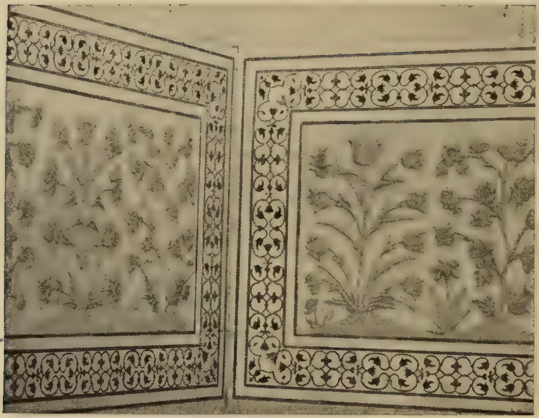
THE TAJ FROM THE GARDEN.

has reared. Passing slowly around it, we viewed the Taj from the bank of the river Jumna. At each of the four corners of its pedestal a marble minaret springs heavenward, like a silver arrow, piercing the air one hundred and forty feet above the pavement, and on the eastern as well as on the western side of the huge platform stands a graceful mosque. No doubt these mosques and minarets were deemed essential, lest this majestic edifice should turn men's thoughts from heaven. At all events, from one of these four marble shafts, uplifted toward the sky, there floats out on the air, five times a day, the muezzin's musical reminder of the only God.

GATEWAY SEEN FROM THE GARDEN.

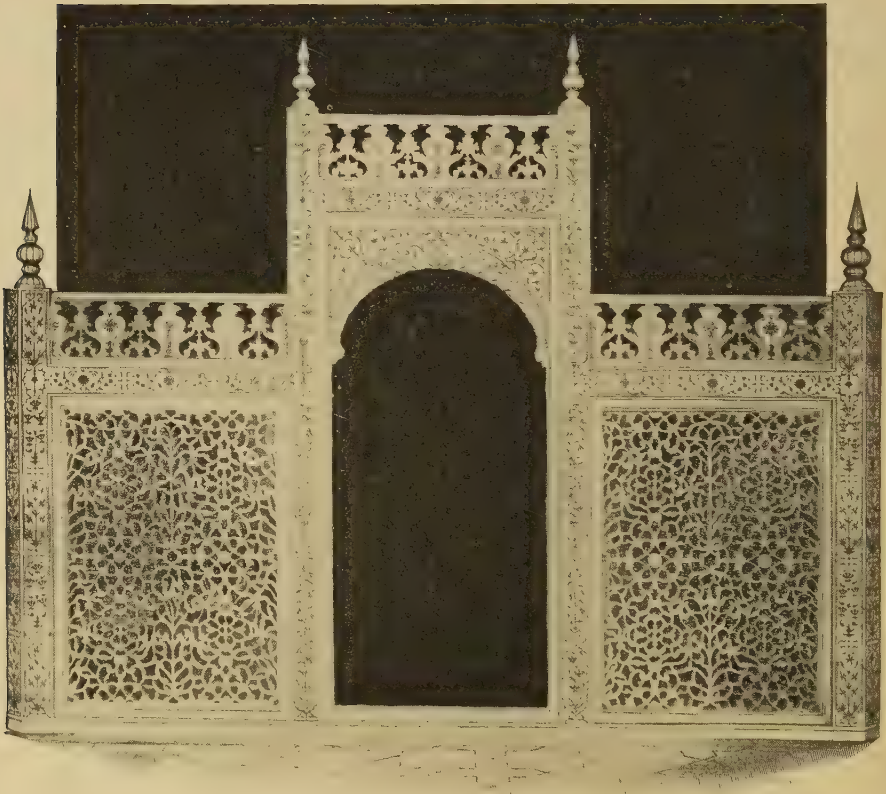


LACEWORK IN MARBLE.



A SECTION OF THE TAJ.

Our admiration of the Taj was still further increased, when we examined its marvelous decorations. Around each archway, inlaid in black marble, are delicate arabesques and countless verses from the Koran, — the graceful Oriental characters mingling and intertwining like the finest scroll-work or the slender stems and tendrils of a creeping vine. The

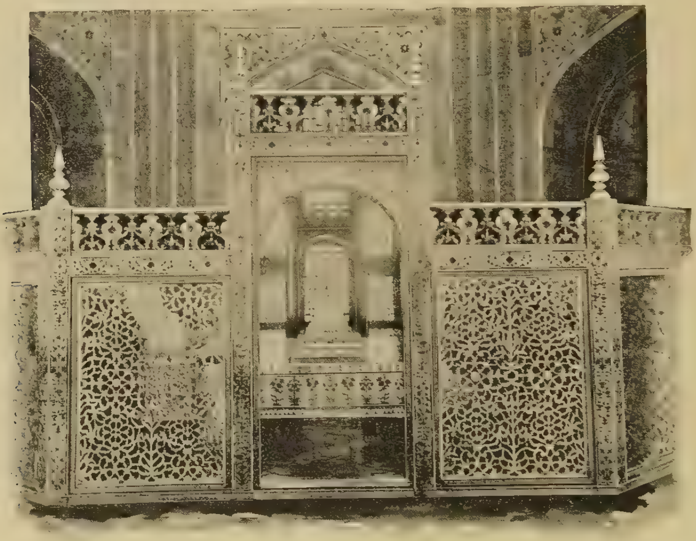


THE SCREEN OF ALABASTER.

walls appear almost as massive as the eternal hills, yet on their milk-white surface thousands of roses, tulips, hyacinths, and daisies are sculptured in relief, as though real garlands had been hung here once with such consummate skill that some delighted *genie* of the Arabian Nights had, by a stroke of the enchanter's wand, transformed them into stone. As I surveyed them with delight, I caught my breath to think of all the labor represented here, and of the patient fingers (long since turned to dust), which planted all these jeweled flowers in their snow-white beds, and made them bloom unchanged from century to century. The Taj, which was begun in the year 1630, is said to have occupied twenty thousand men for twenty years. All India furnished its materials. The marble came from one province, the sandstone from another. The Punjab sent it jasper; Ceylon gave sapphires and lapis-lazuli; and agate, onyx, turquoises, and carnelians came from Thibet, Persia, and Arabia. A twilight gloom pervades the interior of this wonderful mausoleum; but if electric light could suddenly be introduced here, one could believe himself within Aladdin's cave. For then the walls would show with dazzling effect their inlaid agate, jasper, bloodstone, and carnelian. It seems as if the emperor, in madness at his loss, and counting earthly wealth as nothing, had thrust his arms repeatedly into the glittering coffers of the Mogul treasury, and, drawing forth

A TOWER AT AGRA.

great handfuls of rare gems, had scattered them upon this tomb, as ordinary men would lay upon a grave bouquets of flowers. In the very centre of the mausoleum I saw what seemed to be a circular frame of lace suspended from the roof by unseen cords. It is, in reality, a screen of alabaster, six feet in height and sixty in circumference. Each panel is a single piece of alabaster several inches thick, yet carved with so much elegance and skill that one must touch it to believe it stone. Within this exquisite enclosure are two marble cenotaphs, completely covered with mosaic-work in precious stones, one hundred being sometimes used to represent a single flower; and through this mass of floral decorations runs a delicate Persian script, telling the story of these royal lovers in lines of which each letter is a gem.



THE TOMBS OF SHAH JEHAN AND HIS WIFE.

Appropriately enough the sweetest echo in the world dwells in this jeweled cavern. The dome receives all sounds within its silvery crucible, transforms them into purest harmony, and sends them down again as if the upper space were tenanted by a celestial choir, chanting an endless requiem to this ideal union both in life and death. It is particularly sensitive to gentle sounds, and a few notes, sung softly here, float up in rhythmic waves to break upon the concave of the marble arch again, and yet again, until they tremblingly die away like whispered accents of impassioned love. Can anything be more beautiful than this—a building dedicated to the memory of a beloved wife, and at the same time the most perfect structure in the world? It is the grandest yet most delicate homage that man has ever paid to womankind.

There are at least two places in this world where moonlight is essential to complete our happiness—they are Venice and Agra. I had arranged the date of my arrival here with this in view, and hence it was my inestimable privilege to stand here at midnight on the thirty-first of December. Then, gazing on this miracle of beauty, I watched the Old Year take its flight and the New Year steal in with noiseless footsteps, as if to pay its first devotions to the Taj. And as I saw the moonlight gild the slender minarets, till they appeared like beautiful wax tapers lighting this abode of death, and then beheld the Taj itself, one glorified expression of immortal genius, it seemed too wonderful to be reality. It was, in truth, a dream in marble, and, sweetest of all dreams—a dream of love.

THE PASSION PLAY

CHRIST DISPUTING WITH THE DOCTORS. *(Hoffmann)*

THE PASSION PLAY

SOME centuries ago, within the sphere of Christendom, the modern drama was anticipated by numerous symbolical representations of religious subjects. These were at different times called "Miracle," "Mystery," and "Passion" plays. In a remote Bavarian valley the last of all these mediæval dramas still exists. It has, for special reasons, long outlived its kindred, and now upon a solitary altar burns this sacred fire, still kept alive by the breath of simple piety.

HEAD OF CHRIST.
(*Hoffmann*)

In 1880 I saw this play for the first time. I went to it, expecting very little. I left it in astonishment and admiration. In 1890 I beheld it again, and all my first impressions were confirmed. The world is wide, but it contains no sight like that of Ober-Ammergau.* The best proof of this is the fact that, although now no novelty, during the summer months of the decennial periods when the play is given, this great religious drama is witnessed every Sunday and almost every Monday, by a multitude of visitors approximating, in all, a quarter of a million people, who from all corners of the earth make their way, often at serious per-

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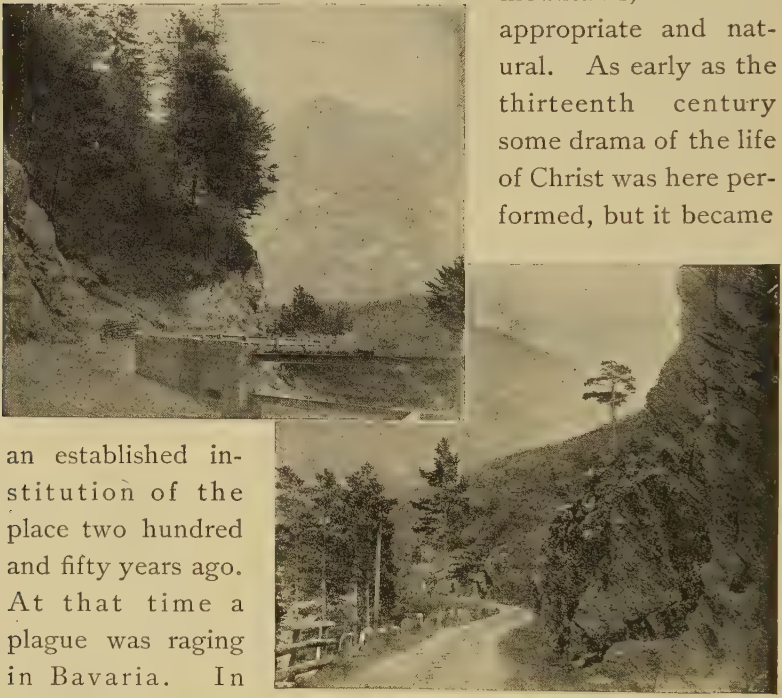
*Ober-Ammergau, as its name indicates, is the *upper* of two villages situated in the *gau*, or district adjacent to the river Ammer.

sonal inconvenience, up the steep mountains of Tyrol, merely to see this wonderful performance.

In any other place the Passion Play would be offensive. Like a wild mountain flower, it would not bear transplanting to another soil. But in Ober-Ammergau, with an historical background as striking and unique as that of its encircling mountains, it seems appropriate and natural. As early as the thirteenth century some drama of the life of Christ was here performed, but it became an established institution of the place two hundred and fifty years ago. At that time a plague was raging in Bavaria. In Ober-Ammergau alone nearly one hundred people had perished. Accordingly, the terrified survivors made a vow, that if their town were spared all further ravages of the disease, they would thereafter, every ten years, portray in a dramatic form, for the instruction of mankind, the story of Christ's life and sufferings.



ON THE WAY TO OBER-AMMERGAU.

Apparently this vow was heard; for the plague at once abated, and, ever since, the villagers of Ober-Ammergau have felt it to be both a duty and a privilege to carry out the promise of their ancestors, bequeathing it from generation to generation as a sacred obligation.

In the year 1870, when the Franco-Prussian war broke out, the Passion Play was being performed, and forty of the Ober-Ammergau villagers were drafted for service in the Bavarian army. Among those who were thus called to take up arms was Joseph Maier, who was then portraying the character of Christ, as he subsequently did in 1880 and 1890. The performances of the Passion Play in that year were, therefore, rudely interrupted; but fortunately Ludwig II, King of Bavaria, was a great admirer and patron of this historic play. He therefore commanded that Maier, instead of serving in the field, should perform his duties as a soldier in the garrison at Munich. In 1871, however, the Play was resumed, and from that time on has been far more widely known throughout the Christian world.

It was late in the afternoon of the fourteenth of May, 1890, when, leaving the train which in three hours had conveyed us from Munich to Mürnau, we started on a six-mile drive to Ober-Ammergau, hidden away among the Tyrolese Alps.

CHARACTERISTIC SCENERY.

We soon discovered that great improvements had been made within the last ten years. In place of the old carriage-road, which was positively dangerous at certain points, we saw that with sublime audacity a highway had been cut for miles out of the very cliffs themselves, and wound in mighty coils about the mountain sides, above ravines a thousand feet in depth, protected along its course by iron railings sunk in the massive rocks. In fact, this new route rivals, alike in labor and in engineering skill, the best made roads of Switzerland. At every turn the scenery was enchanting. From valleys, beautifully fresh and green, rose sharp-pointed mountains, nine or ten thousand feet in height, their sides in many cases, and their summits always, silver-white with snow.

Ten years before, by the old road, we had seen nothing of all this, and therefore could now better understand why the late King of Bavaria found in this region a delightful resting-place, and spent here a large portion of his time. Indeed, so fond was that eccentric monarch of this retired section of his kingdom, that he constructed here a palace, and

MONASTERY OF ETTAL.

laid out a park, upon which were expended several millions. To both park and palace the public has now unrestricted access, and tourists find here an impressive contrast between the rude surroundings of the people of Ober-Ammergau, only an hour's drive away, and the magnificence of a king, whose madness took the form of measureless extravagance, to end at last in violent insanity and a tragic death.

THE PALACE OF LINDERHOF.

Not far from the road leading from the highway to the palace, we came in sight of an imposing structure, which proved to be the old Benedictine monastery of Ettal, founded in 1332. For years this institution exercised a great religious and intellectual influence over the entire valley. The villagers of Ober-Ammergau received instruction in its school, while the library of the monastery, which numbered one hundred thousand volumes, offered to all a rare opportunity for intellectual improvement. It was, in fact, the monks of Ettal who taught the people of this region wood-carving, trained them in music and the representation of religious dramas, and in many other ways made them superior to the average mountain peasantry of Bavaria.

But this is now no longer a religious stronghold. True, its buildings still remain as witnesses to its former wealth and power; but many years ago the monastery was suppressed by the Government, and all its inmates went forth into distant lands. A part of the old edifice is now used as the summer home of the owner of the property; but other portions of it serve as a brewery, and over one of the doors we read with some surprise the legend, "God bless the beer of Ettal."

THE CENTURION'S HORSE.

Not far from this historic structure we came upon a peasant, watering his horses at a wayside spring.

"There," said our coachman, "is one of the characters in the Passion Play."

"Who is he?" I exclaimed.

"He!" said the driver, with a laugh. "I am not speaking of the man, but of one of those horses. It is the one on which the Roman centurion rides in the scene of the Crucifixion." I glanced at one of my companions. There was a look of

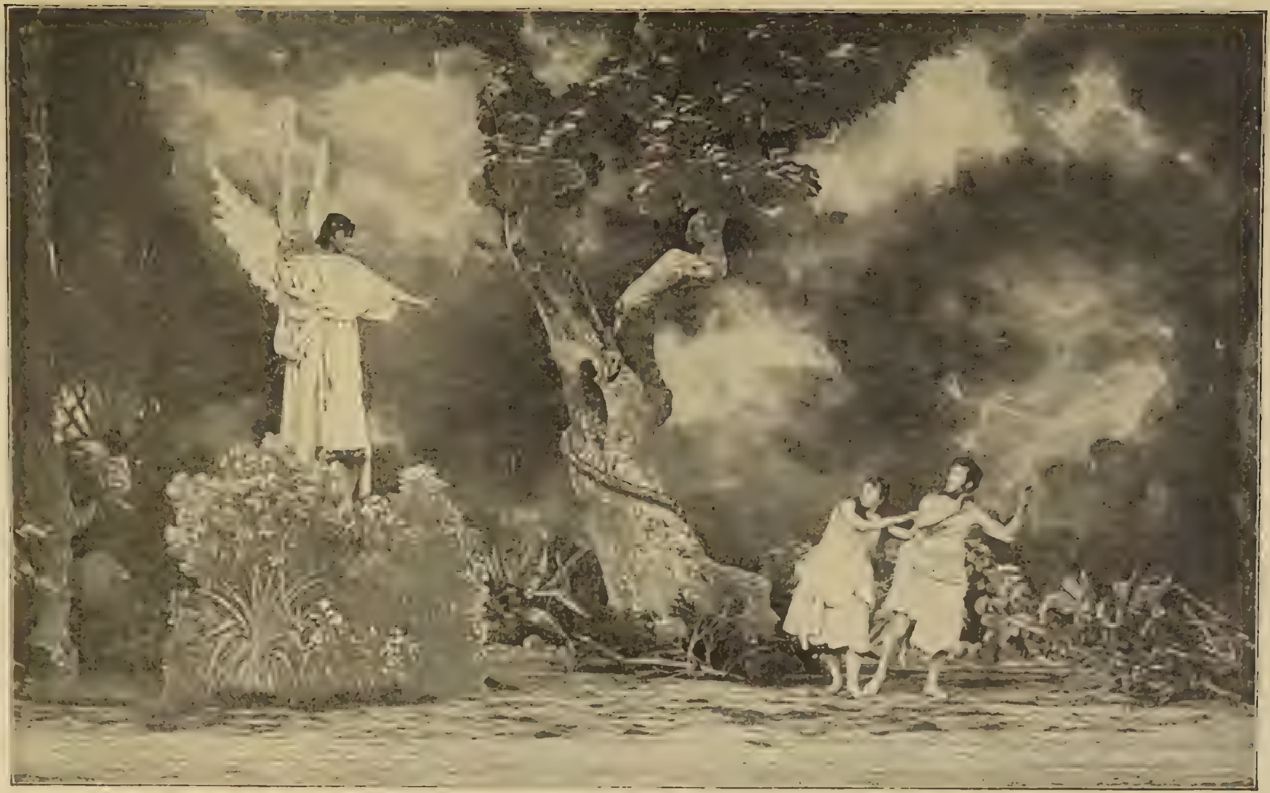


TABLEAU OF ADAM AND EVE DRIVEN FROM PARADISE.

horror on his face. "Do not be shocked," I said. "I understand your feeling perfectly; ten years ago I felt as you do now, but—wait and see."

Half an hour later we suddenly perceived the little village which has gained such world-wide fame. Above it rose, like a familiar friend to former visitors, a striking mountain, called the Kofel, towering two thousand feet above the town itself. But the mighty cross, which in 1880 had formed so prominent a feature of the landscape, was missing from its summit.

THE VILLAGE AND THE KOFEL.

"Where is it?" I inquired eagerly.

"Two months ago," was the reply, "it was blown down in a wild storm; but before next Sunday it will be replaced."

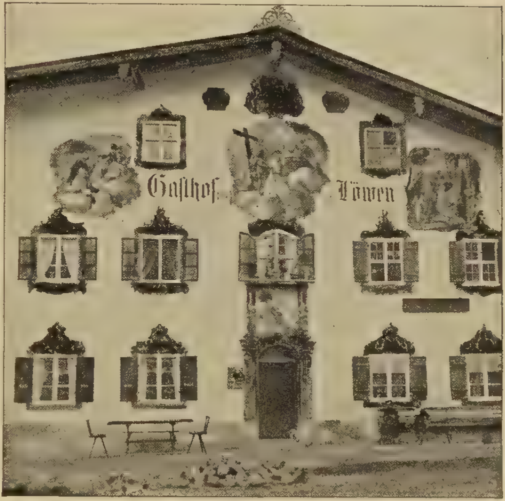
I was rejoiced to learn this fact; for, owing to the peculiar situation of the mountain, the cross upon its summit seemed to be the presiding genius of the place. It glittered in the dawn an hour before the mists of morning left the valley; and even after twilight had enfolded Ober-Ammergau itself in a dusky mantle, that lofty cross, with outstretched arms resplendent in the sunset glow, seems to be giving to the peaceful vale its benediction.

STREAM THROUGH THE VILLAGE.

Passing within the town, our attention was first attracted by one of its most prominent features—the river—which, in a flood of crystal clearness, sweeps through the village directly from the mountains. Both of its banks are lined with houses, barns, and gardens. On almost every dwelling we beheld a cross, indicative of the religious feeling of the villagers.

Another less poetic, but equally characteristic, feature, was the collection of stones on the house-tops, which keep in place the loosely fastened shingles. On one such roof alone we counted one hundred and ninety-seven of these ornaments. Every such structure, therefore, if severely shaken, would yield a good-sized avalanche of miniature mountain boulders; and any Ober-Ammergau peasant who happened to be passing at the time would probably be forced against his will to enact the rôle of the martyr Stephen.

Some of the more pretentious houses are even startling in their external appearance. With the exception of their wooden roofs, they are usually made of cement, covered with whitewashed plaster, and on these pure white walls we saw a strange variety of frescoes, some pretty, others grotesque, but most of them religious in their sentiment. There is in these decorations, as we have hinted, a curious blending of the sacred and the secular. Thus, while on one hotel we saw portrayed in rainbow hues some Bible scenes, together with incidents in the lives of saints, upon another we found depicted, as a most seductive object-lesson, a jovial peasant with a glass of beer, apparently calling out, "Gesundheit!"—"your health!"—to the passer-by.



FRESCOED WALLS.

"GESUNDHEIT!"

"You see," I said to a companion who was paying his first visit to the place, "these people have artistic tastes, which are sometimes thus crudely shown in frescoes, but are displayed with excellent judgment in the costumes used by them in the Play."

"Costumes?" echoed my friend; "what have these peasants to do with the costumes, except to wear them? Of course they are made in Munich or Vienna."

"Only the bare material is bought there," I replied. "The costumes for this year, valued at several thousand dollars, were all made by the villagers themselves, in imitation of old paintings and engravings, and under the direction of the teacher in their school of sculpture—which, by the way, is the very building we are now approaching."

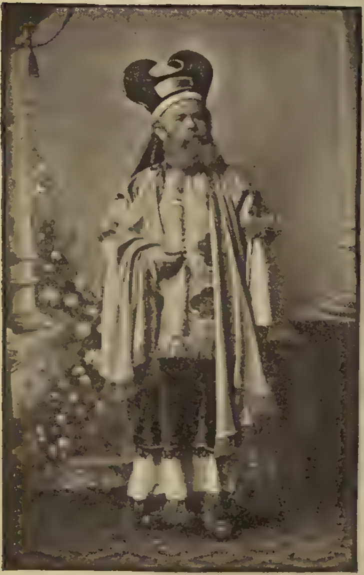
THE SCHOOL OF SCULPTURE.

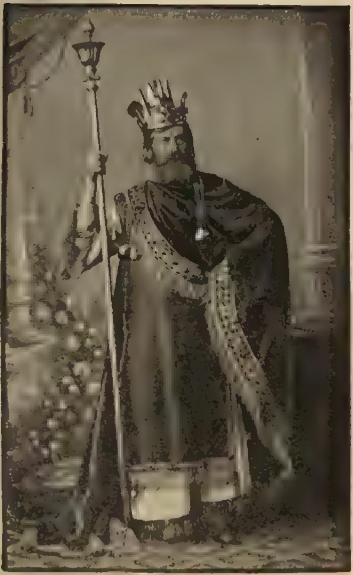
"The school of sculpture!" repeated my companion, "What do you mean by that, in such a place as this? Am I losing my senses, or have you lost yours?"

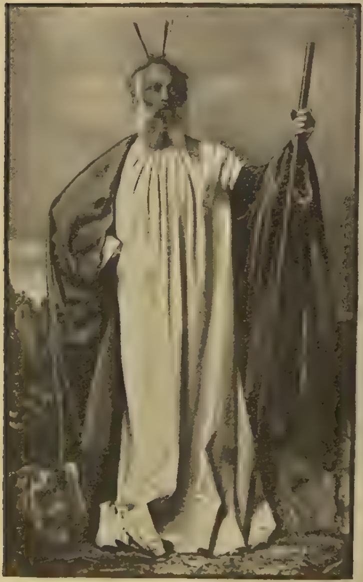
"Incredible as it may seem," I answered, "there is in this secluded spot a permanent school where wood-carving is taught. It has long been supported by the villagers at no little pecuniary sacrifice. It has had at times as many as two hundred and fifty pupils. For recollect that sculpture in wood is still the chief occupation of these people; and Joseph Maier, who enacts the part of Christ, and the Judas, the Peter, the Pilate, and many of the other leading characters, are really artists, their productions being now sent (of course, mainly from their associations with the Passion Play) to every part of Europe and America, and even to Australia."

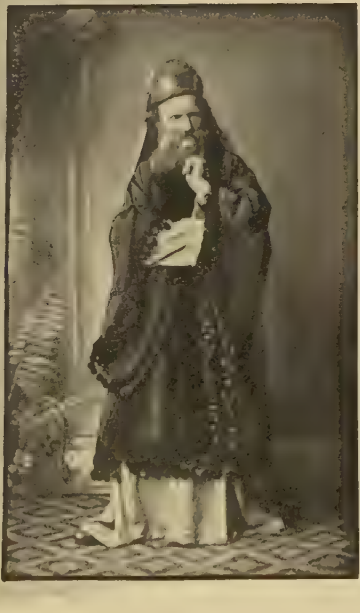
While I was thus speaking, there had emerged from a neighboring house a young man about nineteen years of age.

"That," said our coachman, in a whisper, "is St. John."









ANNAS.

MOSES.

HEROD.

SAMUEL.

I made a sign to my photographer, and pulled the driver's coat-tail, as a hint for him to stop. The youth approached. His face was an agreeable one. His hair was parted in the middle and fell to the right and left upon his shoulders.

"Pardon me," said one of our party, "but I am told that you will assume this year the part of St. John."

"Yes," he replied, his face flushing with pleasure.

"But," I continued, "the programme states that your name is Rendl. Are you the son of Thomas Rendl, who acted the part of Pilate so admirably ten years ago?"

"I am," was the reply; "and he will personate that character again this season."

"Some of us had the pleasure of meeting your father in 1880," I rejoined, "and, if agreeable, we should like to call on him to-morrow."

Meantime I glanced inquiringly at the photographer.

"All right," he murmured.

This signified that "St. John's" portrait had been taken unawares, and in a moment more we were driving on.

Soon after this conversation I paused to note the little house which, I was told, was the home of Pilate and St. John — in other words, of Thomas Rendl and his son.

ST. JOHN.

"Well," exclaimed my friend, who had been looking about him with a dazed expression, "I see that I have thus far been making a mistake. Up to this time I had supposed that Ober-Ammergau was an ordinary mountain village. But I now perceive that in many respects it is unique."

"By the way," he presently resumed, "what has become of the man who took the part of St. John ten years ago?"

"He is now playing the rôle of Judas Iscariot," was the reply. My friend shuddered.

"Furthermore," I added, "either through accident or design, "Judas" is the agent here this year for several parties of excursion tourists." My friend took out his handkerchief and mopped his brow.

THE HOME OF PILATE AND ST. JOHN.

"The trouble with you," I said to him, as we drove through the main street of the town, "is that you have not yet adapted yourself to your environment. You secretly expect to see these actors of the Passion Play, clad in their Oriental robes, standing around the streets in picturesque positions. St. John in shirt-sleeves startles you. The Roman centurion's horse drawing a load of wood inspires you with horror; and Herod playing with his babies seems entirely out of place. You are experiencing in a higher degree the disenchantment that you feel in seeing on the street, in citizen's dress, with his wife leaning on his arm, the actor who an hour before had electrified you as Othello. Of course, one way to see the Passion Play would be to come here on Sunday morning, and leave directly after the performance. But in this way one would see nothing of the village; and to view the Passion Play without the village would be like seeing a diamond without its setting. The great marvel of the Ober-Ammergau spectacle is to behold these pious mountaineers faithfully carrying out the vow of their forefathers, and under that great inspiration rising from the farm and workshop worthily to portray the historic characters connected with the life of Christ."

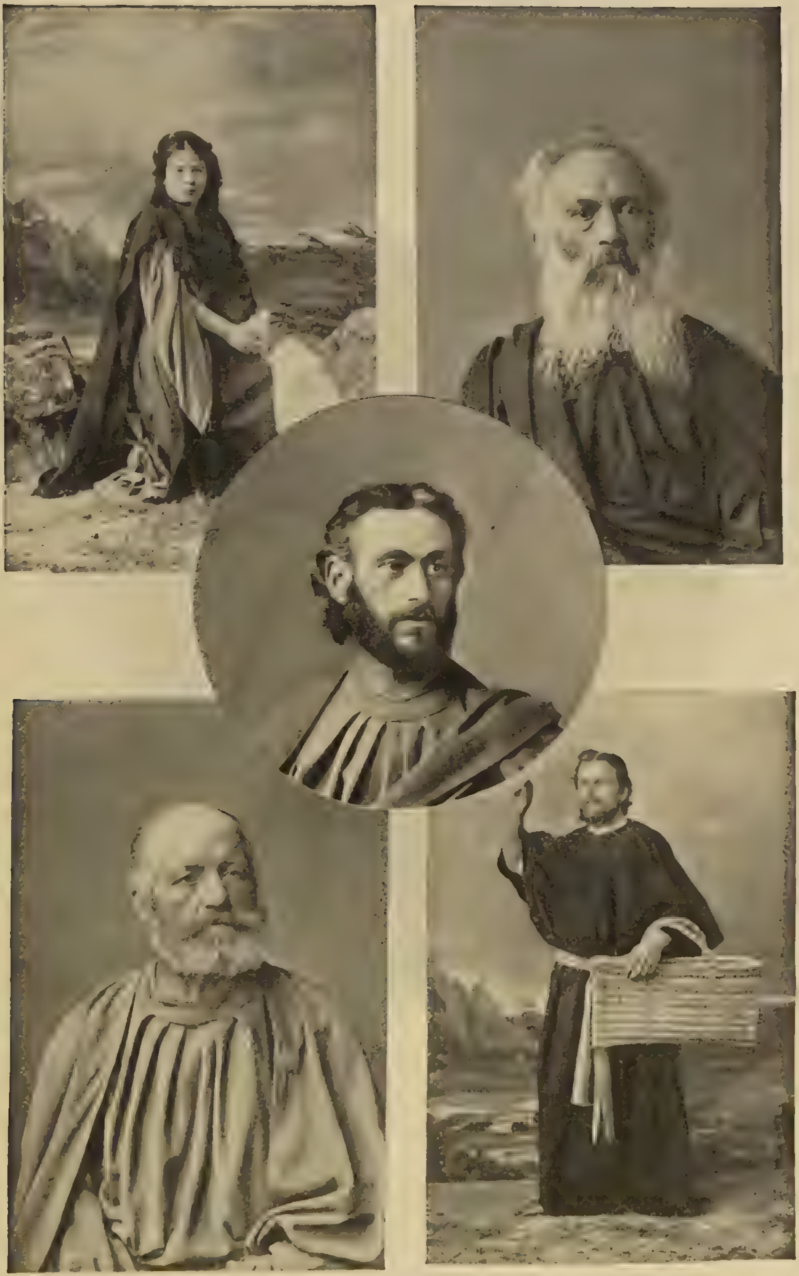
Thus speaking, we had approached the village church,—a weather-beaten structure, above which glittered in the sunlight a richly gilded cross.

"Stop for a moment," exclaimed my friend, "till in the shadow of this sacred edifice you answer me one question: What is done with all the money gained by these performances? Are not these people mercenary in this business?"

"That is easily and satisfactorily explained," was the answer. "The money received is divided into four parts. The first, and much the largest, share, is used to defray the expenses of building the theatre, and of providing suitable stage appliances and costumes for the performers; another part is laid aside as a permanent village-improvement fund; a third share is devoted to the church and to the poor of the community; while the remainder is apportioned among some seven hundred actors. In 1880, Joseph Maier received for his whole summer's work, from May to October, about two hundred dollars. Certainly these villagers are not actuated by mercenary motives; for repeated offers of large sums of money have been made them to perform their drama in various parts of Europe, and even in America; but these have always been emphatically declined."

THE CHURCH.

While this explanation was being given, we had approached the churchyard, where we beheld a fine bronze bust erected to the memory of the pastor of the village, Father Daisenberger, who died in 1883. This worthy priest devoted his whole life to the mental and spiritual elevation of his people. It was he who persuaded them to leave the churchyard where, until then, the Play had been performed, and to build an open-air theatre with a suitable stage. Not only did he



VERONICA.

THADDÆUS.

PHILIP.

BARTHOLOMEW.

SIMON THE CYRENIAN.

CHRIST AND THE BELOVED DISCIPLE.
(Ary Scheffer)

carefully revise the text of the original Passion Play, but he also composed for his parishioners some admirable dramas on religious subjects, and carefully adapted to their use a number of the plays of Schiller, and even the *Antigone* of Sophocles, that they might thus acquire greater dramatic training and rise to a high standard of appreciation.

True, therefore, is his simple epitaph: "His works do follow him"; for not alone do the inhabitants of Ober-Ammergau, every ten years, enact the Passion Play; but, at frequent intervals, winter and summer, on a permanent stage, they still perform the secular plays adapted for them by their pastor.

FATHER DAISENBERGER.

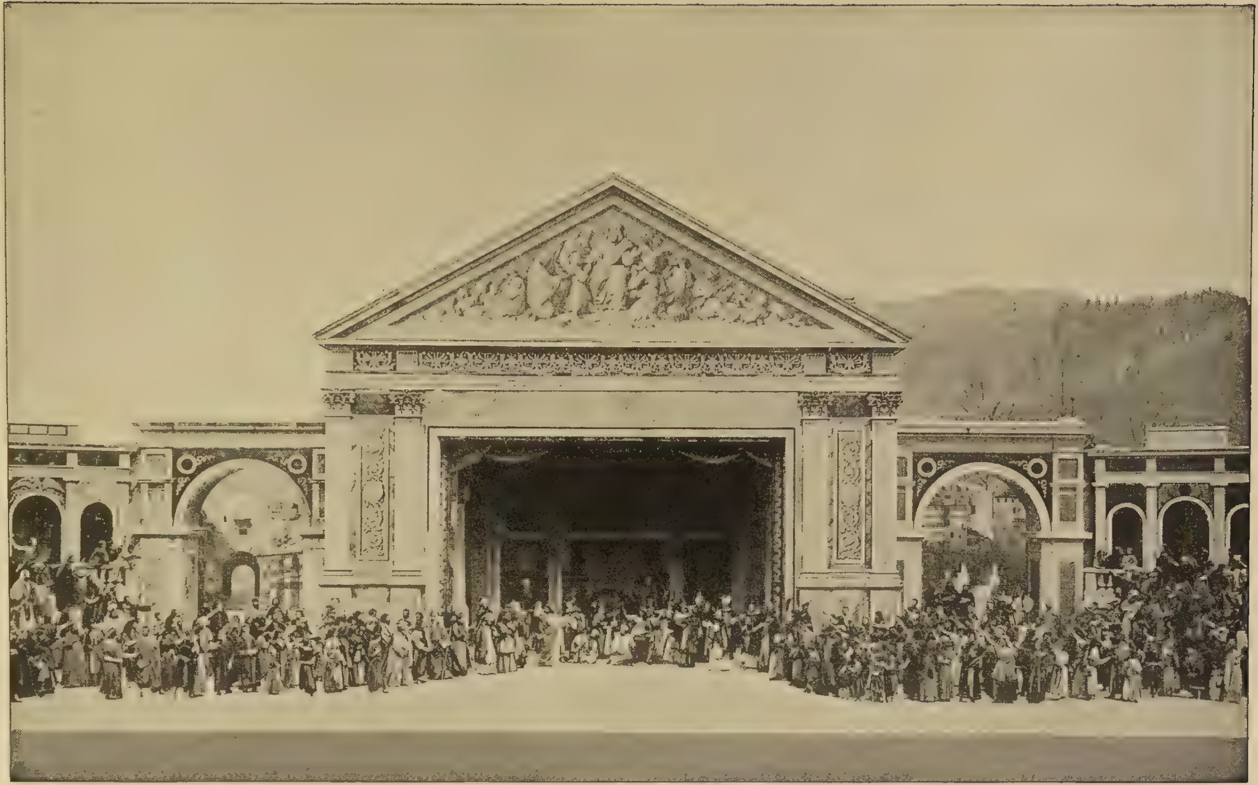
The spirit of this worthy priest, and his belief in the peculiar duty which this village had been set apart to do for Christ and for His church are well exemplified in his own lines:

> "Praise be to God! He hath this vale created
> To show to man the glory of His name;
> And these wide hills the Lord hath consecrated,
> Where He His love eternal may proclaim."

The oldest text-book of the Passion Play now extant bears the date 1662 and is in the possession of the Bürgermeister of the village. It shows that the performances in those early days must have been very crude and realistic, for the Devil was then one of the prominent actors, and would dance about Judas while the latter was being tempted, and finally rush upon Iscariot's body, attended by a retinue of imps when the betrayer had hanged himself. In those days also, just before the play commenced, a messenger would rush upon the stage with a letter from Lucifer, "the Prince of Hell," requesting the audience not to be affected by the Play, but to make all the disturbance they could during the performance, promising to reward them well when they should subsequently make him a visit! But those grotesque features of the Passion Play have gradually disappeared, as priest after priest revised the text and adapted the old drama to the tastes and ideas of modern times.

CHARACTERISTIC DWELLINGS.

Turning at length from the churchyard, we fell at once from the ideal to the practical. We were the earliest visitors of the season of 1890—a small advance-guard of the approaching army—the first drops of the expected shower. True, hundreds of tickets had been bought and rooms engaged for weeks in advance. Thousands, it was said, were on the way. But *we had arrived.* For ten long years the little hamlet had been almost lifeless and forgotten. Now it was once more quivering with excitement, and, like a comet at its periodic visitation, was sweeping from its long obscurity into the



CHRIST ENTERING THE TEMPLE.

vision of mankind. The villagers, therefore, looked on us as the first tangible proofs of the great change.

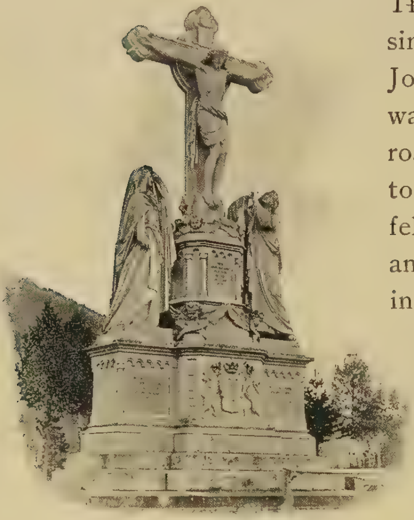
Accordingly, our entry almost equalled that of royalty. Nothing was too good for us. Our host and hostess were especially elated at having the first visitors assigned to them. Hence it was with considerable difficulty that we avoided being "killed by kindness." The utmost tact, for example, was necessary to escape being overwhelmed with gifts of hot sausages, served like Huyler's caramels, "fresh every hour." Moreover, at the least sign from us that we were thirsty, Bavarian beer would flow *ad libitum.*

"Welcome!" exclaimed our landlady, her round face wreathed in smiles; "our one room with a carpet shall be the lecturer's; the lawyer shall be sandwiched between our warmest feather-beds; and as for the photographer, he shall have a room, whose nearness to the stable has for its compensation

A STREET IN OBER-AMMERGAU.

a view of a four-footed actor in the Passion Play,—the ass, used in the entry into Jerusalem."

Next morning (we had come here several days before the first performance) I strolled out through the town for new impressions. My steps first led me to a colossal group of statuary placed on a hillside just above the village. This was presented to the people of Ober-Ammergau by the King of Bavaria in 1875, as a token of his appreciation of their piety. The history of this work of art is singularly tragic. As the statue of St. John, which forms part of the group, was being drawn up the old mountain-road, in places perilously steep, it toppled over from the wagon, and fell upon the sculptor and his assistant, crushing the former to death instantly, while the latter died the next day in great agony. There seemed to me, therefore, something almost repulsive in this figure of the favorite disciple. Notwithstanding its beauty I felt as if the insensate stone had been a moral agent, and had committed parricide in thus taking the life of the author of its being.



A ROYAL GIFT.

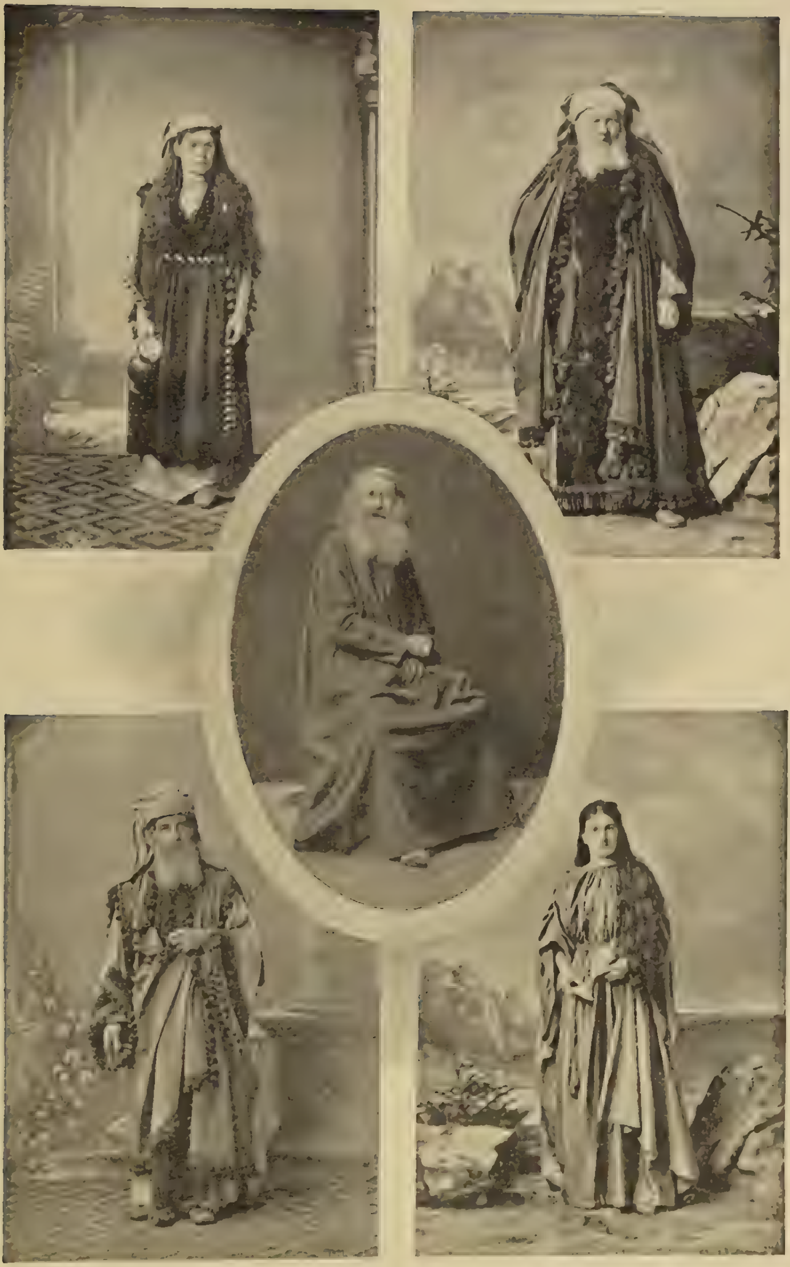
Descending once more into the town, I seated myself at the door of our little inn and looked about me at the village life. Before me was a wooden trough, above which rose a spout in the form of a pump. No handle to this was necessary, for from it flowed a constant stream of cool, pure mountain water. Thither, at intervals of five or ten minutes, all day long, came the people of the neighborhood: a woman with an empty pitcher, a laborer to quench his thirst, a boy to rinse some beer-mugs, or else a little maiden on her way to school, to wet the sponge suspended from her slate. Almost invariably these people bowed, and wished me "*Guten Tag.*" Their courtesy and kind-heartedness were very pleasing.

It is a remarkable fact, that, notwithstanding the crowds that come weekly all summer long from every land to witness something done nowhere else but here, these villagers of Ober-Ammergau have not become self-conceited and extortionate. There are but few exceptions to the rule that they are unspoiled, honest, and obliging. No doubt, if the great influx of rich tourists continued long, the character of the village would soon change; but nine years' enforced seclusion from the world affords an antidote to such short-lived and amazing fame.

IN FRONT OF THE HOTEL.

Across the street, beyond the fountain, was a frescoed house, which, although built two hundred years ago, has still a substantial appearance. It is the home of Johann Lang, who, aside from his official rank as Bürgermeister, is one of the leading men in Ober-Ammergau. In 1890, not only were the finances of the Passion Play controlled by him, but he shared with Maier the care of issuing tickets and assigning rooms to all the thousands who applied for them. At every hour of the day we saw a stream of letters, telegrams, or messages pouring in upon him. Some one appeared to be always going into or out of his house; and frequently a group of ten or twenty persons would assemble there, dissatisfied with the rooms assigned to them and clamorous for a change. The strain upon him must at times have been severe enough to ruffle the most serene of men; but he seemed able to reconcile all the discordant elements and at the same time to control himself. Upon his shoulders, too, in 1890, rested the responsibility of keeping harmony in the ranks of the performers. How difficult that must have been! Imagine what jealousies and bickerings there must be in such a little mountain village. It is true, the principal actors are selected by the people; but even after that is settled, the lesser troubles and minor annoyances must be endless.

UNDER THE KOFEL.



MARTHA.
NICODEMUS.

BARABBAS.

NATHAN.
MARY MAGDALENE.

The assignment of the parts is made by a committee of forty-five villagers presided over by the priest, and the election day is in the last week in December of the year preceding the decennial performance. Before making their choice the members of the committee attend mass in the church, thereby indicating, and no doubt realizing, that what they do will be done under the influence of the purest motives and for the good of their religion. Each player is then required to rehearse his part at least four times a week, and the final rehearsal begins months before the opening of the dramatic season. In the year of my second visit, the Bürgermeister was himself stage-manager, and had trained a number of subordinate actors in their parts nearly every day for at least six months before the Passion Play was presented, and was in all matters of dispute the ultimate authority. Yet, it is not to be wondered at that he should have been appointed to the post; for he first acted in the Passion Play when only four years old, and the representation of 1890 marked the fourth decennial festival in which he took the part of the high priest, Caiaphas.

One day, while strolling through the village, I stopped before a house upon whose wall was an artistic decoration of unusual beauty. It was the residence of the Lechners—father and son. Both are prominent personages in Ober-Ammergau.

THE BÜRGERMEISTER'S RESIDENCE.

The son is considered the best artist in the village, and is one of the principal singers in the Passion Play; while the father is the famous George Lechner, whose rôle of Judas in 1880 was one of the most remarkable in the drama. I had a great desire to talk with this retired veteran, for ten years before I had deemed him, with the exception of Maier, the most talented of all the actors.

Stepping, therefore, to his door, I asked if I might see him. He presently appeared. Though more than seventy years of age, he had not changed materially during the past ten years. I recognized him, therefore, at a glance, and telling him in a few words of the pleasure he had given me ten years before, I asked him if he would appear this season.

VILLAGE HOUSES.

GEORGE LECHNER.

"Yes," he replied; "I shall *appear*, and that is about all. The 'Judas,' of four decades has now become the insignificant 'Simeon of Bethany!' Of course," he added, "I do not complain. *Es kann nicht anders sein.* Only I feel like an old crippled soldier within sound of battle. I have in the house a portrait of myself taken in 1880, in the character of Judas. Would you like to see it?"

Of course I assured him that it would afford me great pleasure. "Can you bear to see the part played now by your successor?" I presently inquired.

"No," he answered quickly; "it recalls to me too vividly the days when I was young and strong."

THE HOME OF JUDAS.

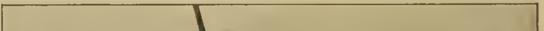
"Ten years ago," I reminded him, "you told me that you did not like the rôle of the Betrayer, and did not wish your son to follow in your footsteps."

"True," he replied, "it was a thankless part; but now that I no longer have the strength to act, I see that I took pride and pleasure in portraying it."

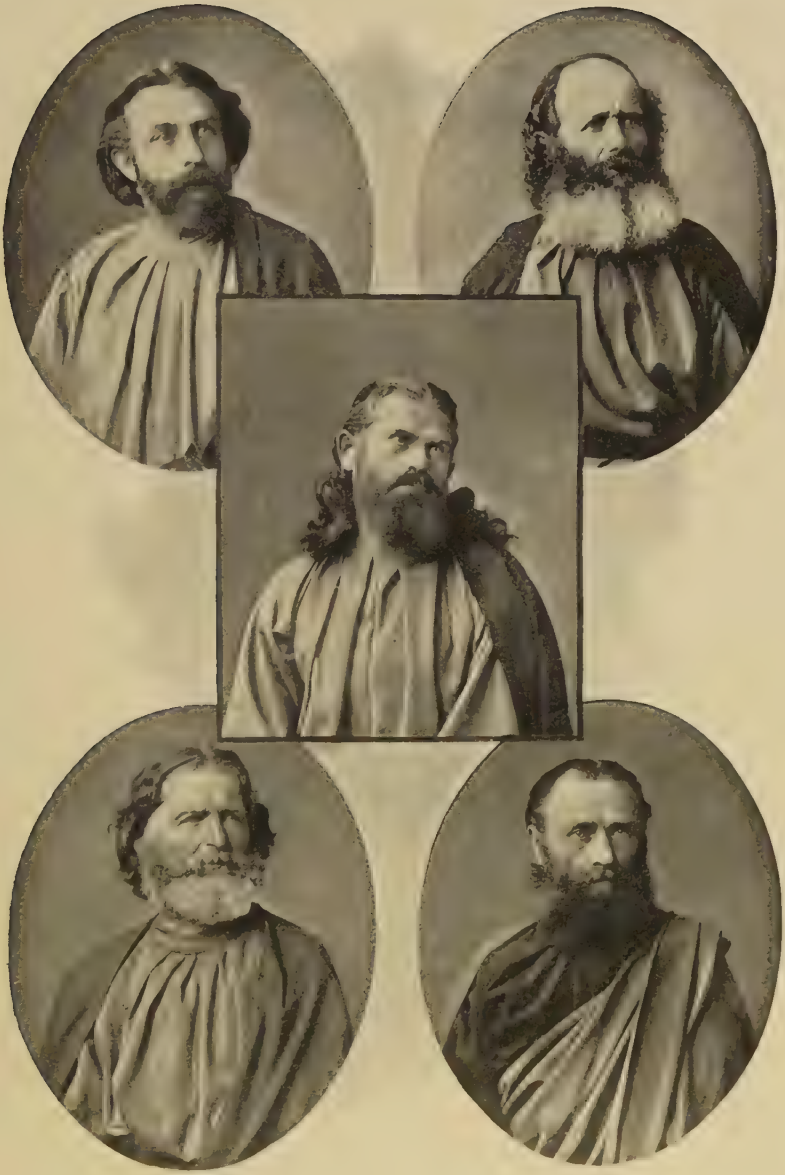
On Saturday, the day before the performance, the church bell awoke me at an early hour, and I beheld the people in

THE JUDAS OF 1880.

great numbers on their way to mass. I followed them into the richly decorated church. Perfect order prevailed. In the front pews were seated all the children, the boys on the right, the girls on the left; and at the end of the service they marched out together, two by two, with folded hands, preceding the adults. Music was rendered by an orchestra consisting of a cornet, violin, and organ. I noticed that Joseph Maier and the Bürgermeister sat in the same pew; and when the priest passed down the aisle, dispensing from his moistened brush the consecrated water, he paused a moment before Maier, apparently offering up for him a special prayer.



Having returned from the church, as I was seated at the window writing, I suddenly heard the distant strains of a band of music, and saw the people pointing toward the summit of the Kofel. At first I could not understand the cause of the excitement, but by the aid of a field-glass I soon



JAMES THE YOUNGER. SIMON.
CHRIST. (JOSEPH MAIER)
JAMES THE ELDER. MATTHEW.

perceived that men were raising on the mountain the new cross, in place of the one blown down some months before. The mammoth emblem was fully forty feet in height, and was covered with zinc, so that, when the sun shone upon it, it was visible for miles down the valley. When the new cross was firmly secured, the sound of a small cannon, fired on the summit, proclaimed the fact to the villagers. I was not surprised to see the satisfaction that beamed from every face at sight of that most welcome restoration; for the people of Ober-Ammergau are almost superstitious in their belief concerning the influence of that cross upon the Kofel.

NATHANIEL.

The dress of the young mountaineers who had performed this task was peculiar. They wore no stockings, their feet being thrust, uncovered, into heavy shoes. But over the lower part of the leg was drawn a thick woolen sock, leaving the knee and ankle bare. The trousers, usually green in color, did not reach the knee. The vest and jacket were adorned with silver buttons, while their green Tyrolese hats were decorated with feathers or bright flowers. In fact, stalwart and handsome men were these young villagers of Ober-Ammergau, and on their return from the mountain they were welcomed not only by the band of music which I had heard, but also by a company of village maidens, dressed in picturesque costumes. Thus escorted by melody and beauty they re-entered their hamlet in triumph.

On the Friday afternoon before the performance, in response to an invitation, I made my way to the house of the "Christus"—Joseph Maier. In 1880 I had made this man's acquaintance, and had been profoundly impressed with his modest manner and unfeigned piety. In 1890 I saw no cause to alter my opinion of him. Yet, if persistent flattery could spoil a man like Maier, he would long ago have been spoiled. For not only have multitudes gathered about his house merely to gain a glimpse of him, but he has received innumerable letters, expressing lavish adulation of his genius. One of these I had the privilege of reading. It was from a distinguished actor in Munich, who assured the peasant of Ober-Ammergau that the hour when he took his arm and walked him through his mountain village was one of the proudest of his life. It is said (and it is not improbable) that Maier has sometimes had to seclude himself after the Play, to avoid being almost worshiped by some of the Bavarian peasants who have been so wrought

THE YOUNG MOUNTAINEERS.

upon that they well-nigh identify him with Christ himself. What is it, therefore, that has kept him always modest and retiring? It is undoubtedly the way in which he looks upon his work. He feels that the praise which he receives is due, not to himself, but to the part which he assumes; and so he said to me impressively: "It is not only the greatest honor of my life to represent the character of Jesus; it is for me also the most solemn of religious duties."

JOSEPH MAIER.

I was astonished and pained to see, not long ago, in the columns of a New York paper, the statement that most of the people of that city who went to see the Ober-Ammergau Passion Play in 1880 discovered there no sign of reverence in the parts presented, and were more struck by the capacity of Maier to absorb beer, than by his pious aspirations. This seems to me incredible, and I cannot understand how any one can be so lacking in ability to discern simple piety and intrinsic merit. As for his private character, that Joseph Maier may drink beer is very probable: he would not be a German if he did not do so. But that he is (as the newspaper account would imply) a coarse, sensual man, I can pronounce to be unqualifiedly false. This I do, not as a defender of religion, nor as a Catholic or a Protestant, but simply a man who hears a worthy person slandered in his absence. I say it the more positively, too, not only from what I myself saw of Maier, but also because a literary friend of mine who lodged nearly the whole summer at his house, and is certainly qualified to judge of his private life, represents him as a thoroughly refined, modest, sensitive man, pure and blameless in life, unselfish, and devoted to his family.

After the lapse of ten years it was with mingled pleasure and curiosity that I again conversed with Maier.

True, the lines in his face had in the interval somewhat deepened, and he modestly said that he was now too old for the part; but his hair and beard were still jet-black, his tall form was as erect, his step was as light, and his gestures were as graceful as before.

However, he looked weary, and said that he was exhausted by the arduous work of preparation. In my first interview with him, moreover, I thought he exhibited considerable reluctance at coming once more into the light of world-wide fame and criticism.

One change in my surroundings made me realize forcibly that I myself was ten years older. In 1880, in that very street, I had seen Maier's children run to meet their father, and had watched him catch them up and hold them to his breast, while his wife looked on from the door-step with a happy smile. Now I perceived that the small children of ten

CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES AT BETHANY.

CHRIST DISPUTING WITH THE DOCTORS. *(Hoffmann).*

years before had grown to be tall, buxom maidens, who evidently took upon themselves the care of housekeeping, to spare as far as possible their mother.

I asked Frau Maier if it was true that, just as she had done in 1880, she would refrain from attending the Passion Play.

"As before, I shall only see the first part," she replied. "After the scene of the Last Supper I can bear to hear no more, and come back to my house alone." This is not strange; for she is evidently a woman of the gentlest heart and finest sensibilities, and would be tortured by the sight of the realistic sufferings, and finally the death which, apparently, awaits her husband on the stage.

BY THE RIVER.

What a transformation takes place in Ober-Ammergau on the Saturday preceding a performance! A multitude of peasants from north, south, east, and west, keep pouring into the town all day long in groups of three or four, having shoes in their hands and umbrellas strapped on their backs—and sometimes even carrying a feather-bed wrapped around a pole.

These people have been tramping over the mountains from their homes fifty or sixty miles away. For them the journey has the sacredness of a religious pilgrimage. To see the Passion Play is the greatest event in their lives, and they would make almost any sacrifice to witness it.

On the Saturday which we spent here, there suddenly appeared toward nightfall a train of landaus, wagons, and omnibuses, all heralded by cracking whips or echoing horns. The streets, so quiet but an hour before, were quickly swarming with humanity. From the variety of languages that filled the air, one might have fancied that the Kofel was the Tower of Babel. Most of the visitors wore an anxious look, like persons searching for lost baggage; and many who had tempted Fate by engaging nothing in advance, rushed frantically from house to house inquiring for beds. We looked upon all this with sympathy, of course, but also with a wicked sense of superiority, arising from the fact that our own rooms and tickets were secure. It is true the accommodations for visitors at Ober-Ammergau in 1890 were better and more numerous than ever before; and yet, so crowded was the town, that, on looking out of my window at daybreak, Sunday morning, I discovered a gentleman completing his toilet in a carriage where he had spent the night.

ONE OF THE HOTELS.

CHRIST. *(Cornicelius)*

Two incidents of that day can never be forgotten. As I was trying to write in all this hubbub, I suddenly heard beneath my window the word *Chicago*. In that remote Bavarian valley, this name produced on me the effect that the word "Spaghetti" does on an Italian.

I sprang to the casement and looked out. In the yard below stood a young man talking to my friend.

"I first heard of the Passion Play," he was saying, "through one of Mr. Stoddard's lectures in Chicago. Ever since then I have been anxious to visit Ober-Ammergau in 1890, and here I am. Did you ever hear him?"

"Alas, yes," replied my friend; "and, what is more, here at my side is his photographer, and Mr. Stoddard himself is upstairs preparing to inflict another lecture on the public."

"He never

I SPRANG TO THE CASEMENT AND LOOKED OUT.

does anything but lecture me,'' grumbled the photographer.

''Gentlemen,'' I called softly from the window, ''you had better put an end to this exchange of confidences. The lecturer will be down directly. Waiter, bring at once refreshments for four.''

Beside the trough, in front of our hotel, there had rested, undisturbed by any German child, for three long days, a good-sized water-pail. On Saturday, at three o'clock in the afternoon, an American family entered the little inn. Five minutes later I thought I heard a familiar melody outside, and looking from the window, beheld a characteristic specimen of Young America standing erect in the pail, and, to the amazement of the peaceful villagers, sailing triumphantly up and down the trough, whistling meantime with all his might the strains of Yankee Doodle! That evening, to escape the tumult in the town, we walked to an adjoining height, and stood in silence to survey the valley. The curtain of the night was falling on that larger stage we call the world. Below us, in the gathering darkness, was the little town, where, on the following day, the story of the Son

YOUNG AMERICA AT OBERAMMERGAU.

CHRIST AND THE ADULTERESS. (*Hoffmann*)

of Man would be portrayed with a reality and pathos which, we well knew, would be overwhelming. At that great height the dwellings of the villagers appeared as small as earthly things appear beside the awful mysteries of Heaven.

LOOKING DOWN ON OBER-AMMERGAU.

"How is it possible," exclaimed my friend, "that simple peasants in the first place can understand, and, secondly, can represent with any skill such a stupendous subject as the Passion Play? Apparently, it is as far above them as is this hill on which we stand."

THOMAS.

"Call to mind," I answered, "the face we saw this morning at the fountain,—that of the man who takes the part of Thomas—and remember that the principal characters in this drama are not common peasants. The sacred play is not alone the central feature in the history of this village: it is the one great event in their individual lives. Toward certain parts in it they gradually progress from childhood to old age, and finally enact those characters with wonderful enthusiasm and religious fervor. None but the people of Ober-Ammergau itself may participate in the Passion Play,—and of them only those whose lives are reasonably blameless. Not to be worthy to appear at all is, therefore, a disgrace; while to enact the part of Christ is the greatest honor of which they can conceive."

GOING TO THE PERFORMANCE.

On Sunday morning, at a quarter before eight o'clock, we approached the theatre, in company with about four thousand people.

Visitors to Ober-Ammergau are, of course, liable to encounter stormy weather, which will seriously detract from their enjoyment of the occasion, although the play goes on in spite of tempests. I, however, was wonderfully fortunate. The weather could not have been finer. The sky was cloudless, and the atmosphere so clear that mountains, miles away, seemed close at hand. Moreover, the air, though cool, was warm enough to make a sojourn out of doors a positive delight. It was the realization of the poet's lines:

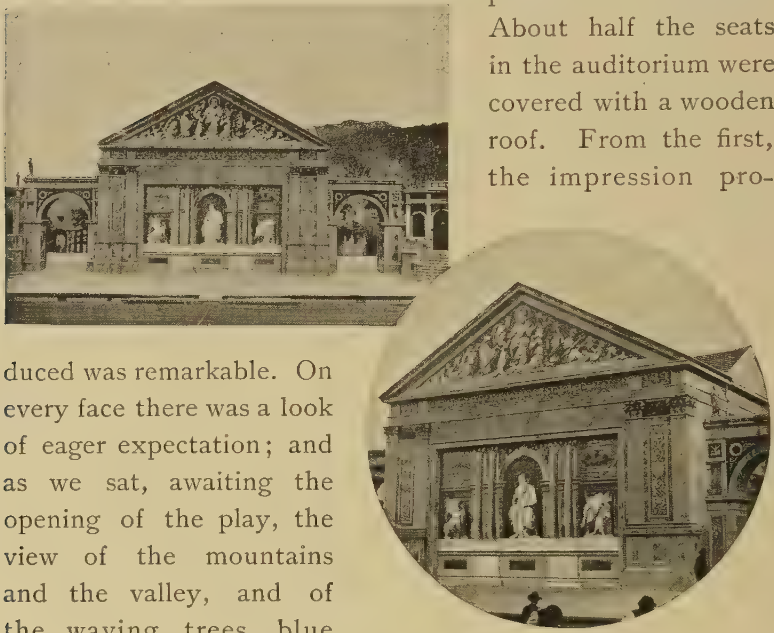
> "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
> The bridal of the earth and sky."

I noticed that the crowd itself was much more orderly and quiet than ten years before. The cause was evident. Then only the best seats had been reserved, while now each place in the great building had its number and corresponding ticket. Accordingly, the humblest peasant had no need of hurry or solicitude. Above the wooden wall we could discern a part of the interior—especially a pediment decorated with a fresco representing Christ surrounded by the poor and suffering, and bearing the inscription: "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

OUTSIDE THE ENCLOSURE.

But it was only on entering the building that we beheld its decorations to advantage. Upon the curtain were finely painted figures of Moses, Jeremiah, and Isaiah. To the right and left of these were passageways which represent streets in Jerusalem. Two houses in the foreground typified respectively, the dwellings of Pilate, the Roman Governor, and

Annas, the high priest. The greater part of the stage was entirely open to the sky, the actors being thus fully exposed to sun and rain. About half the seats in the auditorium were covered with a wooden roof. From the first, the impression produced was remarkable. On every face there was a look of eager expectation; and as we sat, awaiting the opening of the play, the view of the mountains and the valley, and of the waving trees, blue sky, and singing birds, gave to the scene a charming air of freshness and reality.



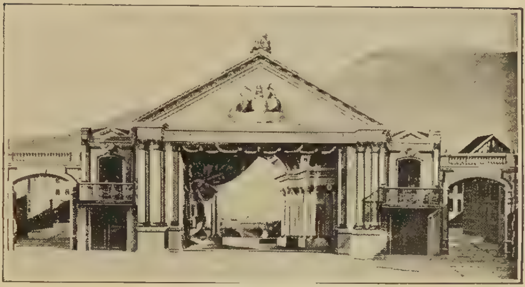
THE STAGE AND CURTAIN OF 1890.

> "How clearly on my inner sense are borne
> The fresh fair beauty of the mountain morn,
> And cries of flocks afar, and, mixed with these,
> The green delightful tumult of the trees.
> The birds that o'er us from the upper day
> Threw flitting shade, and went their airy way,—
> The bright-robed chorus and the silent throng,
> And that first burst and sanctity of song!"

Among those who were then behind the scenes, awaiting their duties for the day, was the daughter of Bürgermeister Lang, who was to assume the part of Mary, the Mother of Jesus. No better choice could have been made. Before I knew who she was, or even that she would appear in the Passion

JESUS AND THE RICH YOUNG MAN.

(Hoffmann)



THE STAGE OF 1880.

Play at all, I was impressed with her sweet, intelligent face and pleasant voice, as she emerged from the doorway of her father's house, and paused to answer, in his place, a few important questions. In 1880 this difficult part was not well taken; but in 1890 its rendition was most satisfactory. Every scene in which the young impersonator of that sacred character appeared still lingers in my memory among the ineffaceable recollections of the Play.

MARY.

It is a remarkable fact that the Virgin in the Passion Play is, from first to last, represented only as a woman,—the loving, tender, broken-hearted Mother of Jesus. This is the more remarkable because these Bavarian peasants are devout Roman Catholics; but the theological presentation of Mary would of course be out of place in this portrayal of her earthly life, and hence, with admirable good judgment it has been omitted from the drama. Another attractive character in the drama was the St. John. In this, too, there was great improvement over the performance of 1880. True, the rôle of the beloved disciple was not very prominent, but everything he said or did was admirably rendered. His great affection for his Master; his grief at the appalling tragedy, which as a faithful friend and follower he must behold; above all, his tenderness to Mary, when he called her "Mother," obeying thus the thrilling injunction of Him who hung upon the Cross; all these were beautiful expressions at once of a delicate nature and a loving heart.

ST. JOHN.

"I venture to make a prophecy," whispered a friend during one of these scenes: "Ten years from now, this young St. John will be selected for the character of Christ."

Another memorable face among the personators at Ober-Ammergau was that of Peter. Apparently, no one could look the character more perfectly than did the worthy peasant who assumed that part. Clad in his Oriental mantle, as he stood in the open air, with the sunlight falling on his silvery

CHRIST. (*Caracci*)

hair and beard, he seemed a living reproduction of Peter, as painted by so many artists in the history of Christianity. Since, therefore, in addition to his looks, he is a faithful and intelligent actor, it is not strange that the festival of 1890 marked the fourth time, that, at intervals of ten years, he has been selected for the part.

It was precisely eight o'clock when a cannon-shot woke the echoes in the neighboring mountains. It was the signal for the drama to begin. As in an ordinary theatre, the leader of the orchestra raised his baton, and the first strains of a solemn overture floated out upon the quiet air. This was the visible prelude to the Play; yet there was one unseen by us, for, during the performance of the overture, all the principal actors were assembled behind the curtain, together with their pastor, engaged in silent prayer.

PETER.

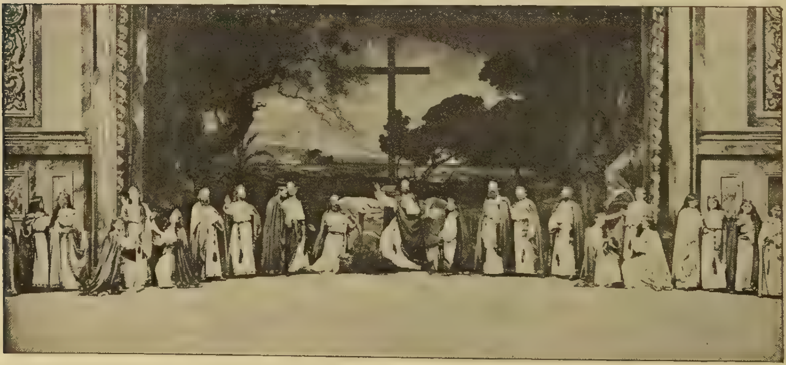
The music of the Passion Play as now performed was written by an Ober-Ammergau schoolmaster. He was a man of remarkable musical ability, and

THE LEADER OF THE CHORUS.

many of the chorals in his composition are dignified and noble, while, as a whole, the music of the drama is in perfect harmony with the simple, sublime, and pathetic scenes which it accompanies.

At length, the preliminary music being concluded, a company of twenty-four persons made their appearance, and moved with slow and dignified steps across the stage, to stand there in a slightly curving line. They represented a company of guardian spirits, who through the entire Play were to perform the duty of the old Greek Chorus in the Athenian drama; that is to say, their part was to announce and to explain its various scenes and tableaux, as well as to impress upon the audience their moral lesson.

Their dress was simple but imposing, like their theme. Over long white tunics, girdled at the waist, were draped mantles of exquisite color, bordered with silver braid. Like



THE CHORUS.

IN GETHSEMANE. *(Hoffmann)*

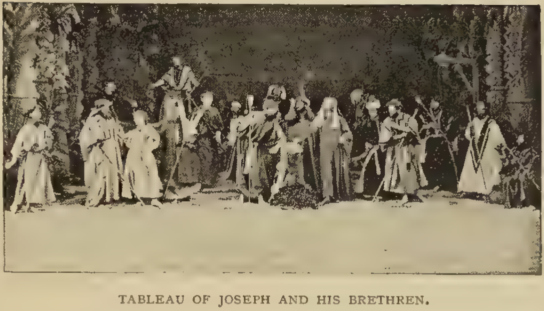


TABLEAU OF JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

all the costumes used in the Passion Play, these must be made of fine material, for daylight makes the use of tinsel and cheap fabrics quite impossible. There are in the Passion Play eighteen acts and twenty-five tableaux, before and after each of which the Chorus sings. These tableaux are regarded as no less essential features of the drama than the acts themselves; their object being to explain to the spectator the Divine Plan of Redemption, as accepted and implicitly believed in by the villagers.

It will be seen, then, that the Passion Play not only represents the actual events connected with Christ's life, but also calls to mind the types and prophecies of those events supposed to be revealed in the Old Testament. Accordingly, when the choristers have sung a few explanatory stanzas, they fall back gracefully to the right and left, while the

TABLEAU OF ADAM AND EVE OUTSIDE OF PARADISE.

curtain rises to reveal the tableau, which, it is thought, typifies the act that is to follow. Hence, the symbolic groups, dramatic scenes, and sacred songs glide one into another all day long without the slightest interruption.

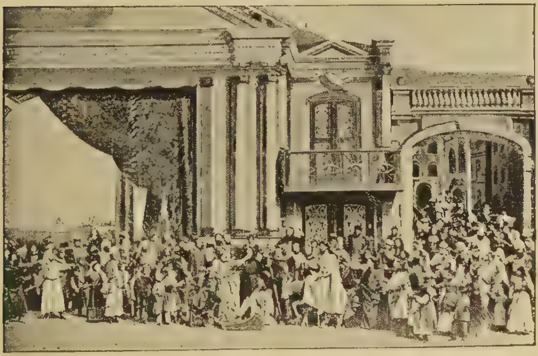
GOING TO JERUSALEM.

Thus a tableau of the miraculous fall of manna in the wilderness precedes the scene of the Last Supper; a representation of the despair of Cain over the murder of his brother, Abel, typifies the act where Judas, in his remorse, takes his own life; the scene of Tobias taking leave of his parents prefigures Christ's departure from Bethany; the group of Adam and his family earning their bread by the sweat of the brow foreshadows Christ's anguish in Gethsemane; and young Isaac bearing the altar-wood up Mount Moriah is emblematic of Jesus bearing His cross to Calvary.

Still another of these tableaux portrays Joseph sold into captivity by his brethren, and is symbolic of the betrayal of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Some of these scenes are wonderful,—first, from the multitude of participants (numbering, as they frequently do, three or four hundred persons); and secondly, from the statue-like repose maintained by even the little children two or three years of age. In one of these tableaux there were perhaps a hundred children; yet through a powerful glass we were unable to detect in them the slightest movement, even when fully three minutes had elapsed between the rising and the falling of the curtain. Moreover, in 1890, I was even more impressed than ten years before with the astonishing rapidity with which these groups

JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA.

were formed. Each individual man, woman, and child must move directly to his place with the precision of machinery, for otherwise such crowds could not be grouped in half an hour's time. The management in this respect is nothing less than marvelous, for not a sound is heard behind the curtain, though sometimes nearly half the inhabitants of the village are assembled there.



THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

But now I was naturally impatient for the first act of the Play itself. Scarcely had the chorus left the stage, after its first appearance, when the air was filled with shouts of rejoicing, and down the streets of Jerusalem I saw a vast multitude of men, women, and children eagerly advancing, waving palm-branches and shouting "Hosanna!" as the Christ made his triumphal entry into the city riding upon an ass. Only a small portion of this multitude can be represented in a photograph, for if the whole stage were portrayed, the figures would be microscopic; but such a picture may at least suggest what the real scene must be. If it be thrilling to behold upon an ordinary stage (as in the play of Julius Cæsar) a moving multitude of fifty actors, imagine the effect produced by five or six hundred

CHRIST. (*Munkácsy*)

men, women, and children, all clad in Oriental costumes, singing and shouting together in the vivid sunlight and under the open sky. One fancies that he is witnessing an actual procession in the Holy City.

The face of the Christ himself who has made this triumphal entry is well worthy of study. Throughout the drama one sees upon that countenance many different expressions, but they are all full of interest. One of the most striking is that which his face wears when he enters the Temple and looks upon the desecration of His Father's house. His features express indignation, but indignation mingled with grief. In the whole course of the Passion Play there is perhaps nothing that puts the delicate appreciation of Maier more to the test than the scene in the Temple with the money-changers. Think of the opportunity for ranting and extravagance when he overturns the tables of those who sell doves and drives the traders forth with a whip of cords! An inappropriate gesture or an unduly violent movement would here be revolting. But Maier is equal to the test. Advancing slowly, and with an indescribable mien of sadness and majesty, he pushes aside the tables, not in hasty anger, but rather as though

A MULTITUDE UPON THE STAGE.

CHRIST TAKING LEAVE OF HIS MOTHER. *(Plockhorst)*

their presence were pollution; and we are so absorbed by his look and action that we hardly notice when they really fall. Perhaps we should not do so, were it not that real doves, thus freed from their cotes, fly over the walls of the auditorium into the adjoining town.

But a still more difficult task is that which Maier encounters in the scene of the Last Supper. The grouping here of Master and disciples closely resembles Leonardo da Vinci's well-known painting. In fact, it reproduces that picture in life with all its Oriental coloring. The scene is one of great beauty and impressiveness, especially when, the dispute having arisen among the disciples as to which shall be chief, the Master rises and with inimitable dignity and reproachful love, slowly passes from one to another, to set them the example of humility by washing their feet.

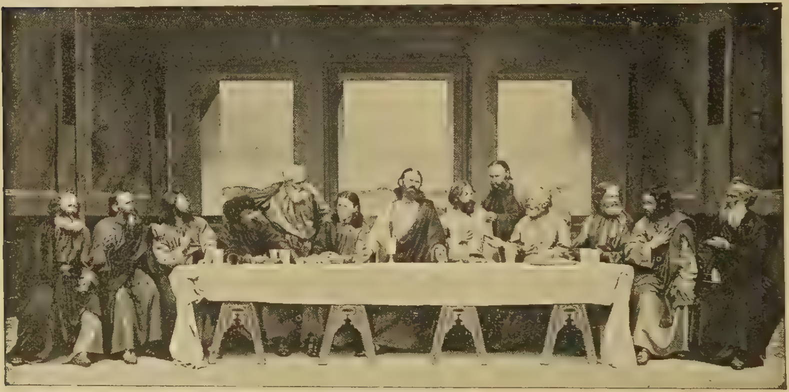
IN THE TEMPLE.

The intensity of his feelings at this time is shown by the remark that Maier afterward made to one of us: "You cannot imagine how I come to love those men at the Last Supper while I am washing their feet."

During the distribution of the bread and wine the silence of the immense audience seemed almost painful in its intensity, the climax being reached when the announcement was made: "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me."

In the consternation which followed, even Judas himself, confused and fearful, exclaimed with the others, "Lord, is it I?" and Maier answered him sadly, yet not without some sternness in his voice: "Judas, that thou doest, do quickly."

THE LAST SUPPER. *(Da Vinci)*



THE LAST SUPPER.

This admonition to Iscariot is soon followed by a scene revealing the hall of the Sanhedrin. At first, however, when the curtain rises, Judas has not yet made his appearance before

CAIAPHAS.

the priestly Council. Caiaphas and Annas occupy the seats of honor above the tables of the scribes. A most exciting debate is being carried on, as to what shall be done with the Galilean, the words uttered being such as must naturally have been spoken on the occasion. In fact, whenever the text of the Passion Play leaves the direct narration of the Gospels, the language is not only simple and dignified, but frequently eloquent. The words of Maier himself are usually only such as are recorded in the New Testament.

The session of the Sanhedrin was presided over by Caiaphas, who, it will be remembered, in private life was the bürgermeister of the village. He was richly attired in a long white robe with silver fringe, while on his breast gleamed the twelve jewels, symbolic of the Israelitish tribes.

THE HALL OF THE SANHEDRIN.

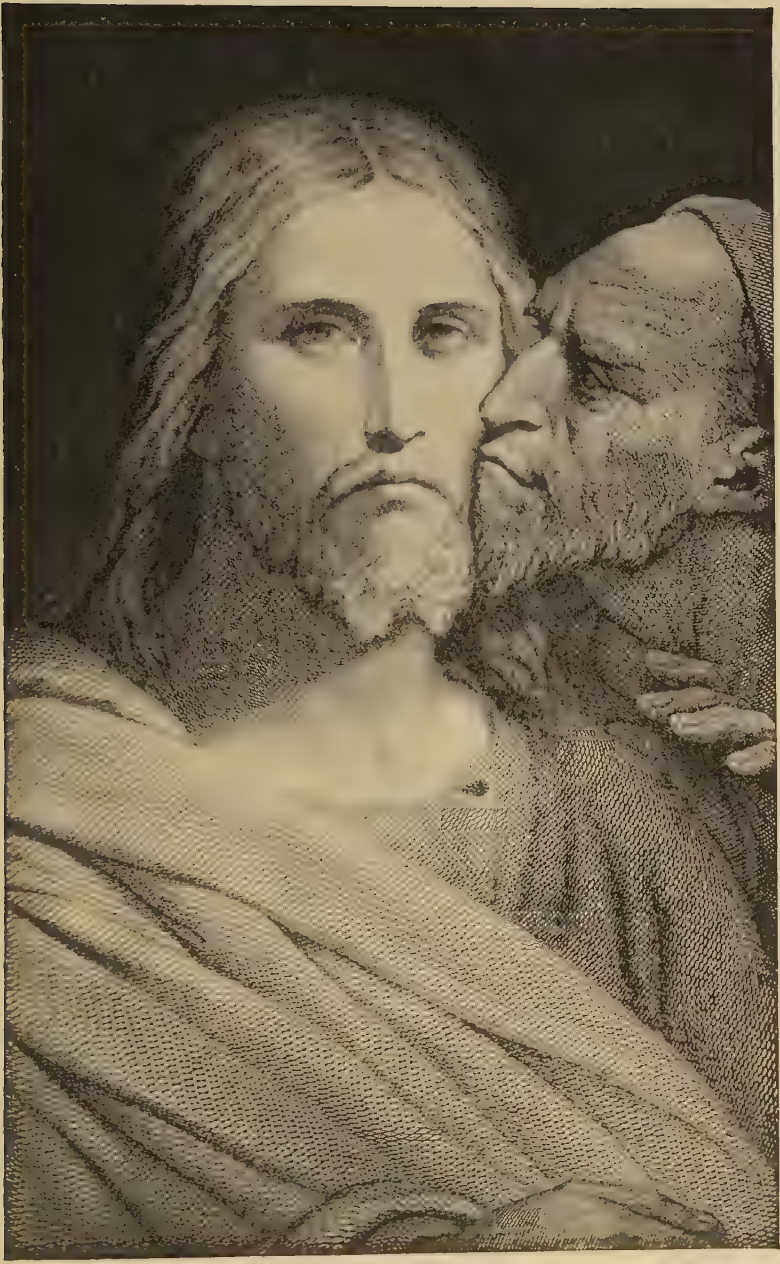
THE DEBATE.

It was he who first addressed the Assembly with passionate eagerness. "Fathers of the people," he exclaimed, "our religion is in danger of being overthrown. Did not this Galilean drive out the buyers, traders, and sellers from the Temple? Did ye not see how he entered our city in triumph? He is carrying the people with him and is teaching them to despise *us!* Shall we wait quietly here till the last shadow of our power be gone? I, at least, am in favor of his death."

The aged Annas also rises from his seat, and exclaims in tones tremulous with emotion and infirmity: "By my gray hairs, I swear not to rest until our religion is made safe by his destruction!"

By the time that Judas makes his appearance before them, they have decided to

THE JUDAS OF 1890.



THE BETRAYER'S KISS. (*Scheffer*)

put the Nazarene to death; but of this they cunningly say nothing. On the contrary, they only tell Iscariot that they wish to imprison his Master for a short time, to prevent his uttering any more extreme doctrines. Judas stands for some time beside a table in the centre of the hall, listening to the words of the Council and struggling with his feelings. The sight of the money, however, and its ring upon the table, decide him. As if lured on by an irresistible attraction, he clutches the silver, tests each piece with his teeth, and sweeps it eagerly into the bag. Meantime, his evil genius (the agent of the high priest) stands watching him intently, as Mephistopheles watches Faust, lest at the last moment he may recoil.

THE PARTING AT BETHANY.

A very beautiful scene in the Passion Play is that of the departure of Christ from Bethany, on his journey to Jerusalem. His disciples are full of foreboding and urge him not to go thither, but Jesus answers them with the command, "Follow Me," and unhesitatingly bids farewell to His Mother and friends, and even to the village of which He was so fond. The parting of Jesus from His Mother is exceedingly pathetic, the more so, as the spectators are well aware of the fate that awaits the Saviour at the hands of His enemies. He Himself knows perfectly what He is to undergo, for He exclaims: "Dear hospitable Bethany, I shall never again linger in thy quiet valley. Beloved Mother, the time appointed from the beginning has come for me to give myself up as a sacrifice in obedience to the Father's will." At length the last embrace is given, and Mother and Son separate only to meet again on the way to Calvary.

IN GETHSEMANE.

The scene of the garden of Gethsemane, whither Maier leads his disciples from the Last Supper, was to us the most touching portion of the entire Play. One naturally trembles at first with apprehension, lest something be done that may offend; but all such anxiety is needless while Joseph Maier takes the part of Christ. Three times he goes apart to kneel in prayer. Three times he pleads in agony: "Oh, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." But, finally, when he has gained the spiritual victory, there falls from his lips the sublime expression: "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt!" There are some voices that can electrify us like a bugle-call, or thrill us with an overwhelm-

PREPARING FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.

ing pathos. Maier has such a voice; and in this scene his simple utterance of the word "Father" affected us more powerfully than any other feature of the Play.

Meantime, his disciples are sleeping on, unmindful of their master's agony. He looks upon them sadly, yet tenderly, as one might look upon a weary child. Then, as though foreseeing the trials which await them, he murmurs: "Sleep on now and take your rest;" but soon awakens them

HIS DISCIPLES ARE SLEEPING.

LIKE A CAPTIVE KING.

with the words: "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." It is indeed time. The Roman guards have come, and, guided by the faithless Judas, have surprised the Christ and his disciples in the shadows of Gethsemane. Iscariot advances with a rapid step, like one forcing himself in desperation to some hateful act that he has promised to perform. His manner perfectly portrays his loathing for this act of treachery. With a quick, convulsive movement, he seizes the hand of his master, and imprints upon his pallid cheek the fatal kiss. Then, with an appearance of relief and shame, he skulks away among the trees, and lets the Roman soldiers do their part.

There is something sublime in the isolation of the Christ, as he quietly surveys the soldiers, who recoil before his glance. All the apparent weakness of the previous hour has vanished. Calm and collected, he confronts them like a captive king. But his disciples, who had so recently uttered protestations of devotion, even unto death, all hurry off in terror through the shadows of the garden, leaving him friendless and alone. Probably no amount of reading can convey

JUDAS BETRAYS HIS MASTER.

CHRIST LEAVING THE JUDGMENT-HALL. (Doré)

to one the utter loneliness of Christ at this pathetic crisis of His life so well as this impressive scene at Ober-Ammergau. Following so closely on the agonizing scene in Gethsemane, it is a never-to-be-forgotten moment when one beholds the tall, majestic form of Maier moving away in solitary grandeur with the Roman guards.

He is at once conducted to the judgment-hall of Caiaphas.

CHRIST TAKEN CAPTIVE. *(Hoffmann)*

The high priest trembles with hatred and rage, as the prisoner appears in the distance, and exclaims angrily:

"Bring him nearer, that I may look upon his face."

Finally, after hearing the testimony of several witnesses, he cries impetuously, "I, the high priest, adjure thee by the living God, tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God?" Maier remains for a moment silent, then with calm dignity replies: "Thou hast said it; and hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." At these words

Caiaphas leaps from his seat, and, tearing open the breast of his tunic, exclaims: "What further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now, ye have all heard his blasphemy What think ye?"

The answer comes at once, unanimous and in decisive tones, "He is guilty of death."

Caiaphas is evidently rejoiced at this verdict, but knows that only a partial victory has yet been gained; for, since Judea is a Roman province, this sentence must be ratified by the Roman governor, Pilate, to whom the victim is now led.

THE JUDGMENT-HALL OF CAIAPHAS.

The space before Pilate's house is occupied by priests and people, all clamoring like hungry wolves for the death of the so-called false prophet and impostor. Attended by one or two officers Pilate steps calmly out upon his balcony, and in a cold, unimpassioned voice, which contrasts finely with the howling of the mob, inquires the meaning of the uproar. It is admirable to see his evident disdain for the fanatical priests, as he replies to their accusations: "No Roman condemns a man unheard. Let him approach."

The scene between the Christ and Pilate is one of the most interesting in the entire drama. The Roman evidently regards him as an innocent and unoffending dreamer. But when the prisoner utters the words: "My kingdom is not of this world. . . . To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." Pilate looks at him, as though there flashed upon his mind the possibility of something deeper in his thoughts than he has yet believed; and he gives utterance to that well-known phrase (echoed, alas! throughout the ages by all thoughtful men) "*Was ist Wahrheit?*" [What is truth?]

At this moment a servant is seen making his way to the proconsul, asserting that he has an important message for him from his wife.

Pilate bids him approach.

"What word dost thou bring me from my beloved wife?" he asks.

The servant answers: "She begs of thee most earnestly to have nothing to do with the just man now standing at thy judgment-seat, for she has suffered many things in a dream because of him." Pilate makes a gesture, as though confirmed in his secret determination.

CAIAPHAS.

"Return," he replies, "and tell her she need not fear on this account. I will do all in my power to release him."

Then turning to the priests, he asks: "Did you not say this prisoner was from Galilee?"

"Yes," answer many voices, "he comes from Nazareth. He is a Nazarene."

"In that case," exclaims Pilate joyfully, "this is not my affair. Herod has come from Galilee to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast. Conduct the prisoner, therefore, to his proper judge."

CHRIST. *(Titian)*

With these words he retires, while the priests, furious at this new delay, are forced to lead their victim to a new tribunal,—the judgment-hall of Herod. There, surrounded by a few courtiers and some Jewish priests, still trembling with excitement, we see upon the throne a man who evidently looks on Jesus as demented, and wishes to have sport at his expense. To all his jests, however, Maier returns not a word, but stands in statue-like repose, as though his thoughts were far away. Herod finally becomes offended at this reticence, and orders him to be clad in a royal robe, and shown to the people in mockery as a "king;" and when the priests clamor for a serious decision, he replies: "My judgment is, that the man is a fool,

PILATE.

CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS. *(Raphael)*

incapable of committing the crimes which you have laid to his charge." Then, dismissing the council, he exclaims to his courtiers: "Come, let us make up for this lost time with wine and song!"

MAIER BEFORE PILATE.

Again, therefore, the uncomplaining prisoner is led to Pilate, who once more steps forth upon his balcony. The scene which follows is intensely exciting. The multitude numbers several hundred men, who move and speak in perfect unison, and seem the very embodiment of bigotry and hatred. Pilate perceives that Jesus is the victim of an unreasonable and infuriated mob. All now depends on his firmness. He evidently does not like to give him up to death, regarding such a course as mean and cowardly. He therefore adopts another plan of rescue, by ordering the thief, Barabbas, to be brought before him from his dungeon. When he appears, the Roman looks

THE JUDGMENT-HALL OF HEROD.

MAIER BEFORE HEROD.

upon this grisly, repulsive man, and smiles, believing that he has solved the problem.

"Men of Jerusalem," he cries, "you know it is my custom at this festival to set at liberty a prisoner. I now intend, as usual, to do so. This man, Barabbas, is a murderer. The other prisoner here is one against whom I can find no cause for condemnation whatsoever. Which of them will you, then, that I release?"

The answer comes at once from priests and populace alike:

"Release Barabbas!"

Pilate, astonished at this response, hesitates a moment, and then once more exclaims: "Nay, I appeal to your reason,—your humanity. Here is an innocent,—there a guilty man. Choose once again, which of them I shall release to you."

Once more five hundred hoarse and furious voices cry, with a wild unanimity that makes our hearts stand still, "Release Barabbas! Jesus to the Cross! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Pilate surveys them in amazement; then turns and looks in pity on the man whom they are thus unmercifully hounding on to death. But the cry grows louder: "If thou condemnest not this would-be king, thou art not Cæsar's friend."

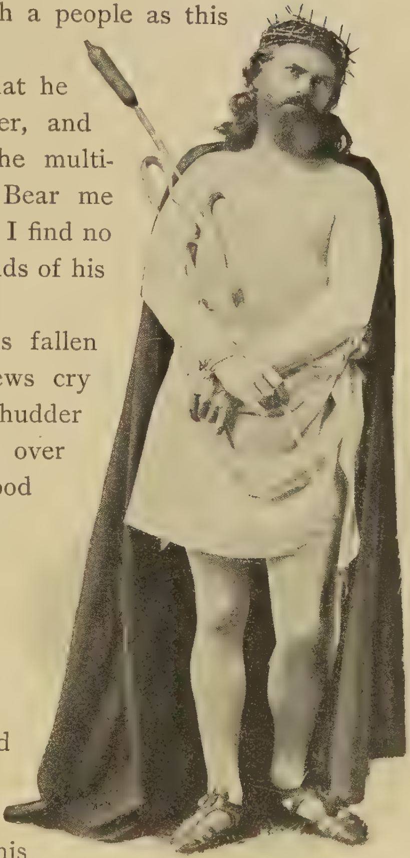
The weak spot is touched. The Roman, anxious to retain imperial favor, first falters, and then yields; yet, as he does so, breaks his sceptre,

BARABBAS.

exclaiming in disgust: "Such a people as this I cannot comprehend."

Then, as if terrified at what he has done, he calls for water, and washes his hands before the multitude, exclaiming fiercely: "Bear me witness! Bear me witness! I find no fault in him. I wash my hands of his innocent blood."

Scarcely have these words fallen from his lips, when the Jews cry out in tones that send a shudder through us as they echo over the adjoining hills: "His blood be on us and on our children!"


"CRUCIFY HIM."

The following scene reveals again the wretched man whose treachery has wrought this appalling result. That his master would be doomed to die was something Judas had never supposed possible. Accordingly his remorse is terrible; and when he learns that Jesus is condemned to the horrible death of crucifixion, he rushes into the presence of the priests and begs in piteous accents for the prisoner's life. But in reply he hears only derisive words and taunting laughter, and, hurling the accursed silver at their feet, Judas goes forth, assuring them with

CHRIST. (*Heck*)

THE SCOURGING.

awful words, that he and they will now go down together to the deepest hell.

Among his utterances of despair are these:

(Guido Reni)

"I am the outcast villain who hath brought
His benefactor to these bonds and death!
The scum of men! There is no help for me!
For me no hope! My crime is much too great!
The fearful crime no penance can make good!
Too late! Too late! For he is dead—and I—
I am his murderer!
Thrice unhappy hour
In which my mother gave me to the world!
How long must I drag on this life of shame,
And bear these tortures in my outcast breast?
As one pest-stricken, flee the haunts of men,
And be despised and shunned by all the world?
Not one step farther! Here, oh, life accursed,
Here will I end thee!"

Finally, in desperation, he loosens his girdle, ties one end of it about his neck, and prepares to hang himself — the

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS.

THE BALCONY OF PILATE.

curtain falling at the moment when he is fastening the other extremity of the girdle to the tree.

From this point onward the tragic scene grows more and more intense. The curtain rises and reveals the stately form of Maier bound to a column. His garments are already stained with blood, and amid brutal mockery soldiers are beating him with ropes. Yet not a groan escapes the sufferer's lips. With a look of agony upon his face, he stands there, patiently enduring all, until his strength can bear no more. He reels, the ropes are loosened, and he falls senseless to the ground.

JUDAS IN REMORSE.

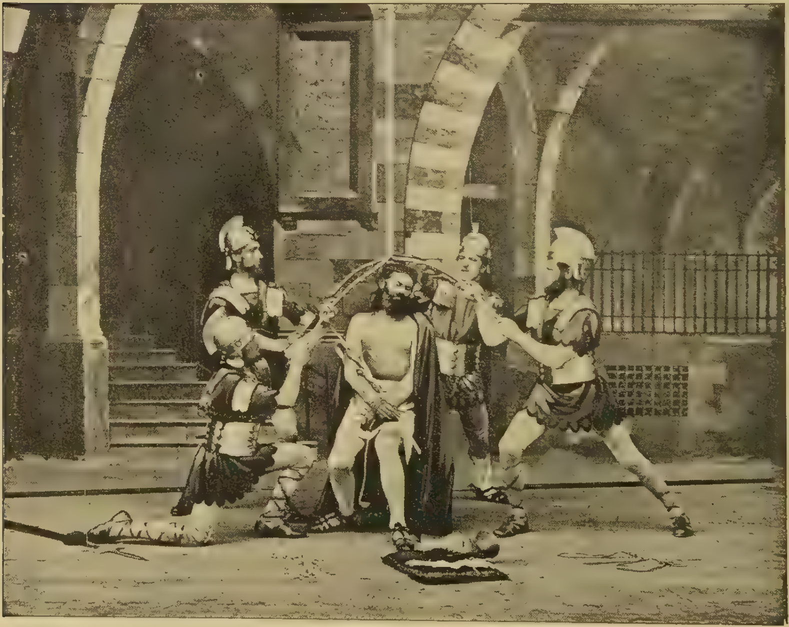
But even this is not enough.

No sooner has he recovered consciousness, than the soldiers resume their cruel sport. They put a sceptre in his hand; they place him on a stool which they call a throne, and, bowing before him, pay him mock reverence with vulgar jests. Then they blindfold his eyes and strike him

(Ittenbach)

on the face, saying: "Prophesy, O King, who thy next assailant will be!" They even go so far as to push him headlong off the stool, and he falls forward on the floor. All this is gross and brutal; yet it does not exceed the recorded facts of history. Through it all Maier never loses his kingly dignity. All the abuse of his persecutors recoils upon themselves; and we lose not a particle of our admiration for the lofty nobility of the man who never stoops to make complaint, but endures all with silent heroism.

Finally, the climax of the persecution is reached when one



PRESSING THE THORNS INTO THE FLESH.

ON THE WAY TO CALVARY.

of the soldiers proposes to add to the prisoner's regal aspect by crowning him with thorns. The crown is quickly plaited, and amid shouts of derision is placed on his pallid brow.

Then, in order not to wound their own hands, four of them take sticks and, using them as levers, press the thorns down into the bleeding flesh. At this moment there is hardly a man in the audience who does not long to leap upon the stage and rescue Maier from such torture, while the excited, breathless look upon the peasants' faces indicates how deeply they are moved by all this realism.

CROWNED WITH THORNS.

(Raphael)

One of the most impressive scenes in the great tragedy is that of the multitude accompanying the Christ to his crucifixion. The crowd, as usual, numbers hundreds of people. Most of them mock the Saviour with cruel taunts and fill the air with jeering cries. In their midst we see the doomed man moving slowly, with difficulty dragging his heavy cross. As he passes one of the houses, there is enacted the episode of the Wandering Jew. A man appears, who tells the sufferer to move on and not disgrace his house by lingering before it. Maier turns and fixes on the man one long, reproachful look. It is enough. The haunted wretch turns and disappears,—destined henceforth, according to tradition, to find no more rest on earth,—not even that of the grave.

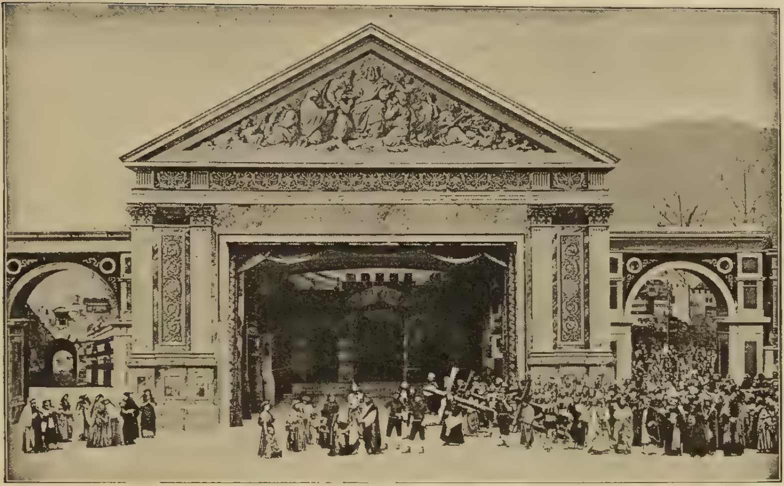
The movement of the cortège is painfully slow, owing to the extreme weakness of the condemned, who, at last, utterly exhausted, totters, and, borne down by the cross, falls heavily to the ground twice. On each occasion, however, he is goaded up and onward by the soldiers, who have no mercy on his weakness. The Roman centurion alone seems more humane. He offers him a flagon of water, saying: "Here, drink and refresh thyself."

The weary sufferer drinks, and attempts to rise, but cannot do so.

Meanwhile, down the street at the left of the stage, have been

THE CENTURION.

DESCENT FROM THE CROSS. *(Rubens)*



MARY RECOGNIZES HER SON.

advancing Mary, the Mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and John the disciple. They do not know yet of the condemnation of Jesus; but alarmed by their own fears and the increasing tumult, they approach the procession. A thrilling moment ensues when Mary recognizes in the exhausted man—her son. With a piercing cry she falls into the arms of Mary Magdalene, exclaiming: "Oh, my God, it is my son, my Jesus!"

MARY.

A few minutes later, when the crowd has disappeared, and while the Chorus (this time robed in black) are singing their sad chant, we hear behind the curtain the heavy blows of a hammer, and shudder at the thought

CALVARY.

of what these ominous sounds foretell.

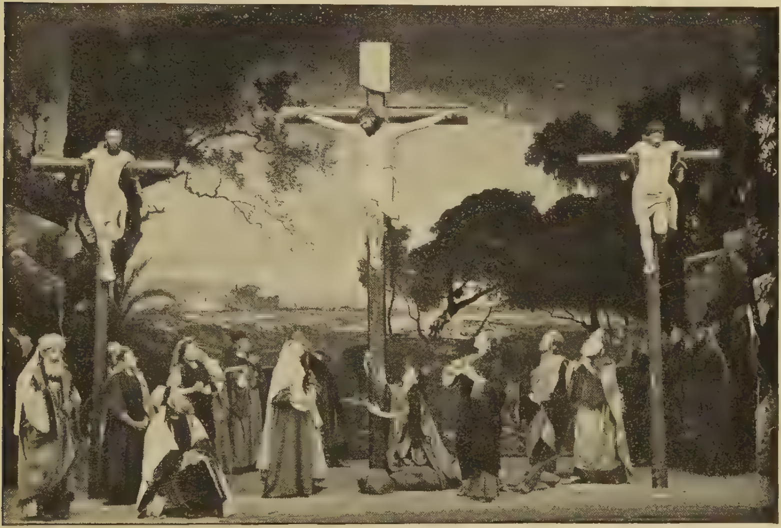
Another moment and the curtain rises to reveal the scene of Calvary. The crosses of the two thieves are erect on either side, the malefactors being simply bound to them with ropes, no pretense of crucifixion being made in their case. In the centre, the cross of Jesus lies at first prostrate. The soldiers are on the point of lifting it; but there is an instant's delay; for the priests have read the inscription sent by Pilate to decorate the cross, and are enraged at it. They will not have it so, and send the messenger back to the Roman Governor insisting that the legend shall not read "This is Jesus the King of the Jews," but rather "This is Jesus who *said*, 'I am the King of the Jews.'"

THE UPLIFTED CROSS.

Pilate, however, sends back the paper with his well-known words, "What I have written I have written."

As if rejoicing to outwit the priests, the Roman centurion seizes the paper, and with one blow of the hammer nails it just above the sufferer's head.

As the cross was then slowly raised to the perpendicular, and the form of Maier was seen, suspended upon it, I caught my breath in fear lest it should fall forward and precipitate him to the ground. Apparently he had no support whatever. Not a trace of any ligament could be discerned, and it was hard to believe that he was not actually nailed to the wood.



THE CRUCIFIXION.

The fact is that Maier wears beneath his tightly-fitting suit of silk a strong corset, into the back of which are fastened hooks which clasp into corresponding rings in the body of the cross. These constitute his only real support; although a tiny piece of wood is placed beneath one heel, and nails, driven between his fingers, give the slightest possible relief to his extended arms. At best, however, to hang there for twenty minutes, is, as he himself assured us, exceedingly exhausting. The realism in all this is terrible. Apparently we see the blood-stained nails piercing both hands and feet.

The crown of thorns still wounds his forehead; his garments are still marked with the blood of the scourging; and, most trying of all, when the centurion's spear pierces his side, what seems to be real blood spurts forth and leaves a crimson stain.

The figure of Maier, as it hangs upon the cross, completely satisfies, from a physical point of view, our ideal of the Crucified One. He is a man more than six feet tall, and has a form that a sculptor might covet for a model. While, therefore, he was suspended on the cross, his figure standing out in clear relief against the background of the inner stage, it seemed to us that we had never seen a crucifix in marble, of ivory, or on canvas, that equaled it in beauty.

MAIER ON THE CROSS.

His words uttered from that position were given with inimitable tenderness. Never can I forget the first sentence that he spoke. Our nerves had been for some time strained to their utmost tension by his previous sufferings and pitiful position, and it thrilled us indescribably to hear him, in a voice broken with pain, answer the railings of the crowd with the pathetic utterance: "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do."

Soon after he turned his weary eyes from his mother to his beloved disciple, and exclaimed: "*Mutter, siehe Deinen Sohn,—Sohn, siehe Deine Mutter!*"

All the details were carried out just as narrated in the Gospels. The soldiers cast lots for his garments; the sponge

HE IS RISEN. (*Ender*)

MATER DOLOROSA. *(Guido Reni)*

was held to his parched lips; and the mysterious, awful words were uttered: "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?"

Finally, it is evident that the end draws near. With a loud voice he cries at last:

"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." The head droops wearily upon the breast. It is finished.

The descent from the cross was beautiful and affecting. The scene was almost an exact reproduction of the masterpiece of Rubens. Two ladders were placed against the cross, one in front, the other in the rear. Nicodemus first ascended and tenderly drew the nails from the wounded palms. The stiffened arms were gently laid upon the shoulders of Joseph of Arimathæa, who stood on the ladder facing the divine figure. Then, by means of a long roll of linen cloth, the body was gradually lowered to the ground. Nicodemus, Joseph, and John lifted the prostrate body, and, with a touching combination of solicitude and tender reverence, laid their precious burden at the feet of Mary, his head resting on his mother's lap.

What made this scene even more pathetic was the fact that it took place under the open sky, as if in actual life. The lights and shadows of the clouds

IT IS FINISHED.

(Michelangelo)

fell on the form suspended on the cross. The breeze stirred the mantle of the weeping mother. The birds flew lightly back and forth above the stage, singing joyously, much as they did, perhaps, on Calvary itself, blithely unconscious now, as then, of earthly tragedy and woe.

The seventeenth act of the Passion Play is devoted to the scene of the Resurrection. Four Roman soldiers are seen watching at the door of the sepulchre in

AT THE FEET OF MARY.

BEARING THE BODY TO THE TOMB.

which the body of Jesus has been placed. At first they discuss the earthquake and other strange phenomena connected with the crucifixion; but finally they fall asleep, and all is still.

Suddenly a crash like a thunder-peal is heard; the door of the sepulchre falls prostrate, and for an instant Maier is seen

THE RESURRECTION.

within the doorway, clad in a glittering mantle, and with a look of triumph on his pallid face. The next moment, two gilded gates spring from the tomb on either side, and make before him a dazzling screen of light. Another instant, and they are thrown back again. But the Christ is gone. We have beheld the vision of the Resurrection.

Before the last act of the drama, the chorus enters on the stage to sing a hymn of exultation, the spirit of which is expressed in the joyful words: "Hallelujah! For the Lord is now risen!" When, at the conclusion of the song, the chorus as usual falls back to the right and left, there is seen in the background a representation of the Ascension, as the Christ, standing upon a slight elevation, gives to his Mother and disciples his blessing and farewell. Nevertheless the real climax of the Passion Play is reached beside the cross of Calvary. The subsequent scenes of the Resurrection and Ascension, although well given, are comparatively unimpressive. But that which will remain forever in the memory is

THE ASCENSION.

the expressive, noble face of Maier on the cross. To-day, although four thousand miles from that idyllic village on the heights, its influence is with me still, and even now, whenever I recall those gentle features, I feel as if some spirit from a better world were breathing on my soul its benediction.

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